

THE ESSENCE OF ISLĀM

VOLUME I

Extracts from the Writings, Speeches,
Announcements and Discourses of the
Promised Messiah
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
of Qādiān
[May peace be upon him]

Published under the auspices of
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad
Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah
[May Allāh be his help]

The Essence of Islām Volume I

**A rendering into English of Extracts from the writings,
speeches, announcements and discourses of Haḍrat Mirzā
Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, the Promised Messiah, and
Founder of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Jamā‘at.**

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE TO THE SECOND EDITION

“Essence of Islām” is an English rendering of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān^{AS}. Ḥaḍrat Aḥmad^{AS} claimed, in 1889, that he was the same Messiah and Mahdī whose advent had been prophesied for latter days not only in Islām but also in other faiths.

Ḥaḍrat Aḥmad^{AS} announced his claim at a time when religious strife was at its worst. In India, the British rule had brought division between the Muslims and the Hindūs, who were always at daggers drawn and their divines were constantly debating. The Christian missionaries entered the fray to convert India to Christianity. As a result, India became the hotbed of religious debate and controversy.

Islām seemed to be on the losing ground in this battle. It had neither the numerical superiority of the Hindūs, nor the resources of the Christians. Its divines had lost the spirit of truthfulness and religious uprightness and had succumbed to lowly morals and materialist desires in the guise of religion. Indeed, the world of Islām was a demonstration of the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{SA} that “A time will come when nothing will remain of faith except rituals and nothing shall remain of Qur’ān except its words...”

At this time of desolate need was fulfilled the grand prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{SA} that even if faith leaves the world altogether and ascends to Pleiades, a man, or some men, from among the Persians would bring it back

to earth.

Ḥaḍrat Aḥmad^{AS} claimed to be that man.

For Muslims, the claim of Ḥaḍrat Aḥmad^{AS} is important, because the Holy Prophet^{SA} had prophesied about the coming of the Messiah and Mahdī to rejuvenate Islām; indeed, he admonished the Muslims: “Even if you have to crawl on ice to reach him, go to him and convey my greetings of peace (*salām*) to him.”

For non-Muslims, the writings of the Promised Messiah^{AS} provide a wake up call to all those who believe that the revelation and signs of God are a matter of old forgotten history. His writings are replete with the themes of establishing a living relationship with Allāh, the role of revelation in achieving that purpose, and the critical importance of following the Holy Prophet^{SA} and acting upon the teachings of the Holy Qur’ān.

This volume sets out, in the words of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{AS} himself, a summary of his exposition of four outstanding topics, namely, *ISLĀM; ALLĀH, THE EXALTED; THE HOLY PROPHET^{SA}*, and *THE HOLY QUR’ĀN*.

The original compilation, in Urdū, Arabic and Persian, from which these extracts have been rendered into English, was collated with great care and diligence by Syed Da’ūd Aḥmad, may Allāh reward him for his great labour of love. He published his selection in the form of a book, *Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiāni, alaihis-salāto wassalām, apnī tehrīrūn kī rū sey*, or ‘Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{AS} of Qādiān, according to his writings’.

The original English translation was done by Ḥaḍrat Chaudhry Muḥammad Zafrullāh Khān^{RA}, a companion of

the Promised Messiah^{AS} who achieved great distinction as a statesman, jurist and scholar of comparative religious studies. The revered translator meticulously rendered many difficult terms into English with great skill and precision. May Allāh the Most High reward him. Volume one and two were published by the London Mosque in 1979 and 1981 respectively. The manuscripts of volumes three and four were also prepared by him but could not be published for some reason. The present publication will *inshā'Allāh* add volumes three and four to the two published by the London Mosque and we hope to add further selections later.

Preparations for the publication of the present edition started under the guidance and auspices of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhir Aḥmad (may Allāh have mercy upon him), the fourth successor to the Promised Messiah^{AS}. Ḥaḍūr^{RH} took special interest in this project and readily responded to many questions that Mr. Munawar Aḥmed Sa'eed—who has revised the present edition—had during the preparation of this volume. Ḥaḍūr^{RH} also set the standards of translation and editing during the preparation of this work, which are now being incorporated in the publications of the Jamā'at. May Allāh reward him abundantly. He was particularly anxious that the translation be as close to the original as possible. He also took personal interest in the translation of the Urdū poems and couplets, which had not been included in the first edition.

No translation can capture the force, the beauty, the depth and the spiritual power with which the words of the Promised Messiah^{AS} are charged. Moreover, a selection cannot be a substitute for the full works studied in the context in which the divinely guided writer placed

them. Serious scholars and sincere followers of the Promised Messiah^{AS} need to study this treasure chest in its original beauty. We sincerely hope and pray that this presentation will acquaint the reader with these works so that a zest for reading the original may be developed (Āmīn).

Every effort has been made to compare the translation with the original works in an effort to keep the translation as close as possible to the original. We have added headings within the text and an Index at the end. Except for the *Ishtihārāt* (announcements), the headings are generally not included in the writings of the Promised Messiah^{AS}. However, every effort has been made to use wordings from within the original text.

Translation of Urdū, Arabic and Persian couplets and poems have been added in this volume. Poems in Arabic were translated after consulting several translations made previously by Aḥmadī scholars and those in Persian were translated with the help of Durr-e-Thamīn Fārsī (translation by Ḥaḍrat Mīr Muḥammad Isma'īl^{RA}). Several scholars assisted in translating Persian couplets and in checking references.

The publishers would like to express their gratitude to Mr. Munawar Aḥmad Sa'eed, for the revision of the translation and greatly appreciate the help and support provided by Maulānā Munīr-ud-Dīn Shams, Additional Vakīl-ut-Taṣnīf, who provided the vital link with Ḥaḍūr^{RH} and was himself a great source of encouragement and inspiration in carrying out this task.

In Rabwah, Vakālat-i-Taṣnīf, headed by Professor Chaudhry Muḥammad 'Alī Ṣāhib, helped finalize the manuscript by revising the manuscript, comparing it with

the original text, checking the references, inserting verses of the Holy Qur'ān, as well as Arabic and Persian texts, and transliterating non-English words. Chaudhry Ṣāhib was assisted by Zulqarnain, Rājā 'Atā-ul-Mannān, Ṭāhir Maḥmūd Mubashar and Kashif Imrān.

The publishers also acknowledge with gratitude the help given by the followings to prepare the second edition for publications:

'Abdul Quddūs Fouzī, 'Abdul-Wahhāb Mirzā, Aḥmad Sa'eed and Ḥannānah, 'Atā-ul-'Azīz, Ḥamid Sa'eed, Anṣar Aḥmed and Uzmā, Dr. Fazal Aḥmad, Fouzan Pāl, Imrān Hye and Hifza, Dr. Karīmullāh Zīrvī, Masood Toor, Mazher Aḥmad and Maryam, Muḥammad Dawood Khokhar, Nūr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad, Salmān Muḥammad Sajīd, Syed Sa'adat Aḥmad, Rizwān Khān, Ṭariq Amjed, Usāmā Malik, Usmān Khān and Usmān Nāṣir Chaudhry.

All references, unless otherwise noted, are from the Holy Qur'ān. In the text, the references to the Holy Qur'ān are given exactly as they were given in the original writings. In the footnotes, references are given using the name of the *Sūrah* followed by the modern numerical system. In these references, we have counted *Bismillahir Raḥmānir Raḥīm* as the first verse and have used the numerical system in which the first number refers to the *Sūrah* and the second number refers to the *Āyah*.

References to the Books of the Promised Messiah^{AS} are based on the London Edition of the *Rūḥānī Khazā'in* published in 1984. An exception is *Taṣdīq-un-Nabī*, which was published in the form of *Three Questions of a Christian Answered* by Anjuman Himāyat-i-Islām. This predates the *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*

and is not included in the *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*. References to *Malḡūzāt* and *Ishtihārāt* are also based on the London edition.

The following abbreviations have been used in this book, Readers are requested to recite the full salutations when reading the book:

SA. An abbreviation for *ṣal-lallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, meaning “May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him,” is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḡammad^{SA}.

AS. An abbreviation for *'alaihis salām*, meaning “May peace be upon him,” is written after the name of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet^{SA}.

RA. An abbreviation for *raḡi-Allāho 'anhū/'anhā/ 'anhum* meaning, “May Allāh be pleased with him/her/them,” is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{AS} and of the Promised Messiah^{AS}.











RH. An abbreviation for *raḡimahullāh*, meaning, “May Allāh have mercy on him,” is written after the names of deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions.

In transliterating Arabic words we have followed the system adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

ا at the beginning of a word, pronounced as *a*, *i*, *u* preceded by a very slight aspiration, like *h* in the English word ‘honour.’

ث *th*, pronounced like *th* in the English word ‘thing.’

- ح *h*, a guttural aspirate, stronger than *h*.
- خ *kh*, pronounced like the Scotch *ch* in 'loch.'
- ذ *dh*, pronounced like the English *th* in 'that.'
- ص *s*, strongly articulated *s*.
- ض *d*, similar to the English *th* in 'this.'
- ط *t*, strongly articulated palatal *t*.
- ظ *z*, strongly articulated *z*.
- ع ' , a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
- غ *gh*, a sound approached very nearly in the *r* 'grasseye' in French, and in the German *r*. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the gargling position whilst pronouncing it.
- ق *q*, a deep guttural *k* sound.
- ء ' , a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by *a* for  (like *u* in 'bud'); *i* for  (like *i* in 'bid'); *u* for  (like *oo* in 'wood'); the long vowels by *ā* for  or  (like *a* in 'father'); *ī* for  or  (like *ee* in 'deep'); *ai* for  (like *i* in 'site'); *ū* for  (like *oo* in 'root'); *au* for,  (resembling *ou* in 'sound').

The consonants not included in the above list have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

The Publishers

INTRODUCTION

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{AS} was born on 20 February 1835 in Qādiān, an outlying small town about 70 miles to the north east of Lāhore. His family was of Persian origin and had been settled at Samarqand in Central Asia. In the first half of the 16th century, his ancestor, Mirzā Hādī Beg, moved from Samarqand into India together with a couple of hundred retainers and settled in the Eastern Punjāb, where he founded the township which eventually became known as Qādiān. As Mirzā Hādī Beg was, at third or fourth remove, a cousin of Emperor Bābar, he was appointed Judge (Qāḍī) and administrator of a sizeable tract of land which comprised over 100 villages around Qādiān. The town was named Islāmpūr Qādiān. In course of time, Islāmpūr was dropped and Qādiān, by easy transition, became Qādiān.

The descendants of Mirzā Hādī Beg continued to flourish at Qādiān, and maintained a semi-royal state under the Moghul emperors. The decline of the Moghul imperial authority, which started towards the middle of the 18th century, began to affect the fortunes of the chieftains of Qādiān also. Mirzā Gul Muḥammad, the great-grandfather of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, was an enlightened personage, learned and pious, who made Qādiān a centre of learning and resort for scholarly divines. He had a very generous disposition and gave away several villages to smaller Muslim chieftains who had lost their own estates to the Sikhs whose power was on the increase at the cost of the central Moghul authority.

Mirzā Gul Muḥammad was succeeded by his son, Mirzā ‘Atā Muḥammad, during whose time Sikh depredations

progressively reduced the area comprised within the Qādiān estate. Finally, the Rām Garhia Sikhs obtained possession of Qādiān itself through trickery and Mirzā ‘Atā Muḥammad and the members of his family had to move from Qādiān and took refuge in the neighbouring state of Kapūrthala. Mirzā ‘Atā Muḥammad died in exile in Kapūrthala, but his body was carried by his son, Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā, to Qādiān, and was given decent burial in the ancestral graveyard.

When Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh established his power over the Punjāb, he permitted Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā, father of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, to return to Qādiān and restored to him a few of the villages that had been originally comprised in the Qādiān estate.

With the birth of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the fortunes of the family improved to some degree and the intervening period of poverty and privation came to an end.

Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā took up military service under Mahārājā Ranjīt Singh and won distinction in some campaigns. Later, he and his elder son, Mirzā Ghulām Qādir, rendered meritorious service to the British, which was duly appreciated by the authorities. Throughout his remaining life, Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā continued to spend money, time and effort in the useless and profitless attempts to recover at least some of the villages that had originally been comprised within the Qādiān estate. The futility of his attempts embittered his days and he died a disappointed man.

His eldest son, Mirzā Ghulām Qādir, who now became head of the family, had in the meantime been appointed to a minor post in the civil administration of the district

at Gurdāspūr, at a distance of approximately eighteen miles from Qādiān.

From his childhood, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad exhibited a religious bent, which became increasingly marked with the passage of the years. As he grew up, he began to devote more and more time to religious exercises and the study of religion, more particularly of the Holy Qur'ān. His father arranged for his tuition at home and he never went to school. When he grew up, his father became anxious to divert his attention to secular pursuits, which might prove of benefit to him in later life, but without much success. Out of a feeling of filial obedience and respect for his father, Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad would undertake and carry out such particular missions, pertaining to his father's attempts to recover a portion of the patrimony, which his father assigned to him. However, he did this with reluctance, as his heart was not engaged in worldly affairs, which had no appeal for him.

At one time, his father procured his appointment to a minor administrative post at Siālkot, which he also took up out of a spirit of obedience to his father, and which he readily resigned as soon as his father's attitude permitted him to do so.

He described his situation at his father's death in the following words:

I was 34 or 35 years of age when my father died. In a dream, I had been warned that his death was approaching. I was then in Lāhore and hastened to Qādiān. He was suffering from dysentery but I had no apprehension whatsoever that he would die the following day. In fact, there had been some change for the better in his condition and he appeared quite steadfast. The following day, we were all with him at noon when he kindly suggested that I

should go and have some rest, for it was the month of June and the heat was intense. I retired into an upper room and a servant began to massage my feet. Presently I fell into a light slumber and the revelation came to me:

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَالطَّارِقِ

We call to witness heaven where all decrees originate and We call to witness that which will happen after sunset.

I was given to understand that this revelation was by way of condolence on behalf of God Almighty, as my father would die that very day after sunset. Holy is Allāh! How Glorious is He that He conveyed His condolence on the death of a person who had died sorrowing over his wasted life. Most people would be surprised at this interpretation of mine that God Almighty consoled with me. It should, however, be remembered that when God, glorified be His name, treats someone mercifully, He deals with him like a friend. We read in the traditions that on certain occasions God Almighty laughed. This also is an expression of the same type.

When I received this revelation, which presaged the death of my father, the thought passed through my mind, due to my humanity, that some of the means of income, which were available to my father, would now be closed and we might be confronted with difficulties. Thereupon I received another revelation:

أَلَيْسَ اللَّهُ بِكَافٍ عَبْدَهُ

Is not Allāh sufficient for His servant?

This revelation conveyed great comfort and satisfaction to me and it found its firm place in my heart. I swear by God Almighty in Whose hand is my life that He has fulfilled this comforting revelation in a manner that was beyond my imagination. He has provided for me as no father could have provided for anyone. I have been the recipient

of His continuous bounties, which I find impossible to count.

My father died the same day after sunset. This was the first day on which I experienced a sign of Divine mercy through revelation concerning which I cannot imagine that it would ever cease to have effect during my lifetime. I had the words of the revelation carved on a semi-precious stone and set in a ring, which I have with me securely. Nearly 40 years of my life passed under the care of my father, and with his departure from this life, I began to receive Divine revelation continuously.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 192-195, footnote]

This was Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad's first experience of Divine revelation. As he has himself observed, he was 34 or 35 years of age at that time.

As time passed, this experience multiplied progressively and gained in volume and scope, comprising Divine assurances of security, progress, support and success, and became studded with grand prophecies and Divine signs.

On his father's death, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad became entitled to half of his father's property, but he left the management of the whole of it in the hands of his elder brother and was content with the meagre and austere provision that his brother made for his maintenance. The world was not his major concern and all his interest and attention were concentrated on communion with the Divine and winning His pleasure.

His father had arranged his marriage at an early age, but even the responsibilities of marriage failed to wean him away from the pursuit of that which he had made the purpose of his life. From his first wife, he had two sons, Mirzā Sulṭān Aḥmad and Mirzā Faḍal Aḥmad. Under Divine direction, he married a second time, in 1884, into

a noble Sayyed family of Delhi. His second wife bore him several children. He was survived by three sons and two daughters. The eldest of these was a son born on 12 January 1889, who was named Bashīr-ud-Dīn Maḥmūd Aḥmad. In his birth was fulfilled a grand multi-faceted prophecy of his father which had been published on 20 February 1886.

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad's study of religion was not confined to Islām. At an early age, he entered upon a study of the principal faiths then current in India, which deepened his appreciation of the teachings of Islām, till he emerged as a champion of Islām. He was greatly depressed by the feeling that there was little understanding of true Islāmic values even among the Muslim divines and that the common run of Muslims were a prey to ignorance and superstition and had little regard for Islāmic teachings.

The collateral branches of his own family were sunk in superstition and made a mockery of religion and religious practices. Some of them openly denounced Islām, gloried in their disbelief, even reviled the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] and held the Holy Qur'ān in contempt. This occasioned great distress to Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, and, though he made repeated efforts to win them back to sincere allegiance to Islām, God Almighty, the Holy Prophet^{SA} and the Holy Qur'ān, his efforts had little effect upon the attitude, conduct, and behaviour of his collaterals. He was further depressed by the Divine revelation:

ينقطع أباؤك وبيدك منك

**He (God) will cut asunder thy collaterals and will begin
(His favours) with thee.**

By the time he had arrived at forty years of age, his mind was possessed by a strong urge to undertake the championship of Islām vis-à-vis all other faiths, and he finally announced that he had resolved to set forth the truth of Islām and the utter beneficence of its teachings in an epoch-making book which he designated Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya. In the preface of the book he announced that if anyone, professing a faith other than Islām, would set forth a convincing refutation of the proofs and arguments expounded in the Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya and would furnish in support of his own faith even one-fifth of the proofs he had adduced in support of Islām, he would be rewarded with 10,000 rupees, at which figure Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad valued his entire property at the time. This challenge has not been seriously taken up for more than a century.

While he was still occupied with the compilation of Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, of which only four parts had yet been published, he received the revelation that God had commissioned him as the Reformer of the fourteenth century of the Hijra, and had entrusted the revival of Islām to him. In pursuance of this commission, he laid the foundation of the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community on 23 March 1889. Soon thereafter, it was revealed to him that he was the Promised Messiah and Mahdī (the Divinely Guided Leader) whose advent in the latter days had been prophesied by the Holy Prophet of Islām [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him].

The publication of the very first volume of Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya was acclaimed by the Muslims as an outstanding and matchless performance, and leading Muslim divines, newspapers, and journals acclaimed the publica-

tion of the great work in laudatory terms. In consequence of the publication of the successive parts of Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, its revered author had become the most renowned and honoured personage in the contemporary world of Islām.

With the announcement of his claim that he had been appointed the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, a storm of bitter and abusive opposition was let loose against him from all directions. He was condemned as an apostate from Islām, who had put himself outside the pale of Islām and all sorts of opprobrious epithets were applied to him. He was called Antichrist and it was declared that his life was forfeit. In the estimation of the Muslim divines, he fell utterly from grace and no protestation or explanation on his part served to soften the bitterness of their hostility towards him. This continued all through the rest of his life, and though over ninety years have passed since his demise, he and his daily expanding Movement continue to be the sharpest thorn in the sides of the Muslim divines. Bitter persecution breaks out from time to time against the members of his Movement, but this only serves to furnish greater publicity to the Movement, in consequence of which increasing numbers of reasonable and reflecting people continue to identify themselves with the Movement.

One of the earliest revelations vouchsafed to Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad was:

I shall carry thy message to the ends of the earth.

At the time of the revelation, he was not widely known even in his own hometown and he lacked altogether all normal means of publicity and propaganda. At that time, Qādiān had not yet found a place on the maps and did not

even possess a telegraph office, was not connected with the railway system of the province, and could not be reached by a metalled road. The nearest railway station and telegraph office were at a distance of 11 miles, a journey to which occupied the better part of three hours. Despite all this lack of normal facilities, the Aḥmadiyya Muslim Community has, during the last hundred years, spread to the farthest corners of the earth and the prophesy just mentioned has been, and continues to be, fulfilled in an astonishing manner.

The main thrust of the opposition to the claim of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad has been, and continues to be, that he claimed to be a Prophet in contradiction of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] being the Seal of the Prophets as mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān.¹ This objection derives from deliberate misrepresentation of his claim. His opponents first wrongly defined Prophethood as confined to law-bearing Prophets and then turned around and condemned him on the ground that he virtually claimed to be such a Prophet, and this in the face of his repeated and emphatic denial of such a claim. Innumerable times he affirmed that he believed that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was the Seal of the Prophets in its highest and widest meaning and that his own claim of Prophethood meant only that he was favoured with frequent converse with God; that he had brought no new law, was completely subject to the Holy Qur'ān and that he had been favoured with frequent converse by God on account of his utter devotion to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and as his perfect re-

¹ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

flection. This is put beyond doubt by the following extracts from his writings.

ز عشاق فرقان و پیغمبریم بدیس آمدم و بدیس بگزیم²

The summary and essence of our faith is that:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ³

Our belief that we profess in this life and with which, through the favour of God Almighty, we shall pass on to the next life, is that our lord and master, Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is the Seal of the Prophets and Chief of Messengers, at whose hands the faith was perfected and the bounty was completed through which, by treading the straight path, a person can reach God Almighty. We believe with absolute certainty that the Holy Qur'ān is the last of the heavenly books and that not a word or vowel point of its laws and limits and commandments can be added to or subtracted from. No revelation can now be received from God, which can have the effect of modifying or abrogating the commandments of the Holy Qur'ān, or of changing any single one of its directions.

Anyone who thinks otherwise is, according to us, not believer, and is a heretic and kāfir. We also believe that even the lowest stage of the straight path cannot become available to a person without following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] let alone the higher stages of that path. We cannot attain to any stage of honour and perfection or of nearness to God except through the true and perfect following of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. What-

² From amongst the lovers of the Holy Qur'ān and of the Holy Prophet are we;

This is the path by which we came and which we shall always follow. [Publisher]

³ There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah. [Publisher]

ever is bestowed upon us is by way of reflection and through the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 169-170]

The five pillars on which Islām is based are part of our faith. We hold fast to the word of God, the Holy Qur'ān, to which we are commanded to hold fast. Like Fārūq (may Allāh be pleased with him), we announce that the Book of Allāh suffices us, and like 'Āyesha (may Allāh be pleased with her), when there is a difference between the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, we give priority to the Qur'ān. We believe that there is no one worthy of worship except Allāh and that our lord and master, Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is His Messenger and is *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'*. We believe in angels, the true nature of resurrection (spiritual resurrection) of the bodies, the Day of Judgement, Heaven and Hell. We believe that whatever the Glorious and Majestic God has stated in the Holy Qur'ān and whatever the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has said, is true. We believe that whoever subtracts the smallest particle from the law of Islām or adds to it, or lays the foundation of neglecting obligations and of indifference towards them, is without faith and is turned away from Islām.

I admonish the members of my Community that they should have true faith in the credo that:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ⁴

and that they should die in this faith. They should believe in all Prophets and all books, the truth of which is affirmed by the Holy Qur'ān. They should observe the fast and perform the Ṣalāt and pay the Zakāt and perform the pilgrimage and carry out all that God Almighty and His Messenger have prescribed and should abstain from all

⁴ There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. [Publisher]

that they have forbidden and thus conform in every respect to Islāmic commandments. We consider it our duty to accept all that is supported by the consensus of the righteous ones who have passed away and all that is considered as part of Islām by the consensus of the *Ahl-i-Sunnat*. We call to witness the heaven and the earth that this is our faith.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, p. 323]

I call Allāh the Exalted to witness that I am not a non-believer. I believe that:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ⁵

I believe about the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that:

لَعَنَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَكَانَ تَمَّ التَّيِّبِينَ⁶

I make declarations on the truthfulness of this statement of mine equal to the names of Almighty Allāh, and the number of words in the Holy Qur'ān, and in accordance with the perfections attained by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in the determination of Allāh.

No part of my doctrine is contrary to the commandments of Allāh and His Messenger. If anyone thinks so, it must be due to his misunderstanding. Anyone who still considers me a kāfir, and does not desist from calling me one, should remember that he will be called to account for it after his death. I call God, the Glorious, to witness that I have such firm faith in God and His Messenger that if the faith of all the people of this age were placed on one side of the scale and my faith is placed on the other side, then, by Allāh's grace, my faith would prove to be the heavier.

⁵ There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. [Publisher]

⁶ '.... but he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of the Prophets.'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

[Karāmāt-uṣ-Ṣādiqīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 7, p. 67]

The purport of my teaching is: Believe in God as One without associate, and have sympathy with God's creatures and be of good conduct and think no ill. Be such that no disorderliness or mischief should approach your heart. Utter no falsehood, invent no lies and cause no hurt to anyone whether by your tongue or your hands.

Avoid all manner of sin and restrain your passions. Try to become pure hearted, without vice. It should be your principle to have sympathy for all human beings. Safeguard your hands, your tongues and your thoughts against all impure objects and disorderly ways and all kinds of deceit. Fear God and worship Him with pure hearts. Refrain from committing wrong, trespass, embezzlement, taking bribes or unfair partisanship and keep away from evil companions. Safeguard your eyes against treachery and your ears against listening to backbiting.

Entertain no ill designs against the members of any religion or any tribe or group. Be sincere counsellors for everyone. Let no mischief-maker or one given to bad behaviour ever be of your company. Shun every vice and try to acquire every virtue. Your hearts should be free from deceit, your hands should be innocent of wrong and your eyes should be free from impurity. Take no part in any evil or transgression.

Put forth your utmost efforts to recognize God, finding Whom is salvation and meeting Whom is deliverance. He manifests Himself to him who seeks Him with love and sincerity of heart, and He reveals Himself to him who becomes truly His. Pure hearts are His thrones, and tongues that are free from falsehood, abuse and vain talk are the places of His revelation. He who loses himself in seeking His pleasure becomes a manifestation of His miraculous power.

[Kashf-ul-Ghiṭā', Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, pp. 187-188]

Bear in mind that it is our faith that the last book and last law is the Holy Qur'ān and that thereafter till the Day of Judgement, there is no law-bearing Prophet nor any recipient of revelation who is not a follower of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. This door is closed till the Day of Judgement, but the door of revelation through following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is ever open. Such revelation will never be cut off, but law-bearing Prophethood or independent Prophethood have been put to an end and will not be opened till the Day of Judgement. He who says he is not a follower of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and claims that he is a law-bearing Prophet, or is a Prophet without bearing a law, is like one who has been carried away by a fierce flood and is thrown aside and cannot recover himself till he dies.

[Review bar Mubāḥatha Batālwi and Chakrālvi, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, p. 213]

It is an attractive principle that promotes peace and lays down the foundations of good accord and helps moral conditions that we should accept as true all the Prophets, whether they appeared in India or Persia or China or in any other country, and God established their honour and greatness in millions of hearts and made firm the roots of their religions and let them flourish for centuries. This is the principle that the Qur'ān has taught us and according to this principle, we honour the founder of every religion, which has become well established, whether of the Hindūs or of the Persians or of the Chinese or of the Jews or of the Christians.

[Toḥfah Qaişariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 12, pp. 259]

The truth of a Prophet might be known in three ways:

First, through reason. It needs to be considered whether reason affirms that a Prophet or reformer should appear at the time when a Prophet or a Messenger claims to have

come, and whether the condition of mankind demands such a reformer.

Secondly, the prophecies of previous Prophets should be studied whether any of them had prophesied concerning his appearance or concerning the appearance of a Prophet at the time of his advent.

Thirdly, it should be considered whether there is Divine help or heavenly support for his claim.

These three conditions have been laid down from ancient times for testing the claim of a true commissioned one of God. God has had mercy upon you and has established all three conditions in my support and it is up to you to accept me or not.

[Lecture Siālkot, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, p. 241]

From the beginning, I have been of the view that no one becomes kāfir or dajjāl by rejecting my claim. Such a one would certainly be in error and astray from the right path. I do not call him faithless but he who rejects the truth that God Almighty has disclosed to me would be in error and astray from the straight path. I do not designate anyone who believes in the Kalimah as a kāfir, unless by rejecting me and calling me a kāfir, he himself becomes a kāfir. In this matter, my opponents have always taken the lead. They called me kāfir and prepared edicts against me. I did not take the lead in preparing edicts against them. They would be prepared to confess that if I am a Muslim in the estimation of God Almighty, then by calling me kāfir they themselves become kāfirs according to the edict of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Thus, I do not call them kāfir; they themselves fall within the purview of the edict of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 15, pp. 432-433]

Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, the Promised Messiah and Mahdī [peace be on him] devoted the whole of his life to

the service of Islām. He died at Lāhore on 26 May 1908. Till the evening of the previous day he was occupied with the composition of a paper designed to furnish a peaceful *modus vivendi* between the Muslim and non-Muslim sections of the people of the sub-continent, which he designated *Paighām-e-Şulah* (A Message of Peace).

He wrote and published more than eighty books in Urdū, Arabic and Persian, in which he presented a true exposition of the teachings of Islām, based on the Holy Qur’ān and the practice of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] shorn of all the innovations and incrustations that had been grafted upon them during the centuries of decline. He also set forth in his writings and speeches the life-inspiring philosophy that permeates every commandment, direction and prohibition comprised in the Holy Qur’ān, which constitutes the guidance that mankind would need in the epoch that was opened with his advent.

*What is Islām, but to lose one's self
for the sake of God;
And to surrender one's own pleasure for His.*

ISLĀM

The True and Living Faith

I perceive that through believing in Islām fountains of light are coursing through me.

1

ISLĀM

The Purpose of Religion

The true purpose of adopting a faith is that one should acquire such certainty concerning God, Who is the fountainhead of salvation, as if one can see Him with one's eyes. The wicked spirit of sin seeks to destroy a man and a person cannot escape the fatal poison of sin till he believes with full certainty in the Perfect and Living God and till he knows for certain that God exists, Who punishes the offender and bestows upon the righteous everlasting joy. It is a common experience that when one believes in the fatal effects of anything one does not have recourse to it. For instance, no one swallows poison consciously. No one deliberately stands in front of a wild tiger. No one deliberately thrusts his hand into the hole of a serpent. Then why does a person commit sin deliberately? The reason is that he has not that certainty in this matter as he has in other matters of the kind that we have mentioned. The first duty of a person, therefore, is to acquire certainty with regard to the existence of God, and to adopt a religion through which this certainty can be acquired so that he should fear God and shun sin. How can such certainty be acquired? It cannot be acquired through mere stories. It cannot be acquired through mere arguments. The only way of acquiring certainty is to experience God repeatedly through converse with Him or

through witnessing His extraordinary signs, or by keeping company with someone who has that experience.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 447-448]

The purpose of religion is that man should obtain deliverance from his passions and should develop personal love for God Almighty through certain faith in His existence and His perfect attributes. Such love of God is the paradise, which will appear in diverse shapes in the hereafter. To be unaware of the True God, to keep away from Him, and not to have any love for Him, is the hell which will appear in diverse shapes in the hereafter. Thus, the true purpose is to have full faith in Him. Now the question is which religion and which book can fulfil this need. The Bible tells us that the door of converse with God is closed and that the ways of obtaining certainty are sealed. Whatever was to happen, happened in the past and there is nothing in the future..... Of what use then is a religion that is dead? What benefit can we derive from a book that is dead? What grace can be bestowed by a god who is dead?

[Chashma-e-Masīḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 352-353]

The purpose of accepting a religion is that God, Who is Self-Sufficient and is in no need of His creation or its worship, may be pleased with us, and that we should experience such grace and mercy as should wipe out our inner stains and rusts so that our breasts may be filled with certainty and understanding. This is not possible for a man to achieve through his own devices. Therefore, God the Glorious, keeping hidden mainly His own Being and the wonders of His creation, for instance, souls, bodies, angels, heaven, hell, resurrection, prophethood, etc. and yet disclosing them partially through reason, ap-

pointed his servants to believe in all these mysteries.

[*Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, p. 81*]

Recognizing a True Faith

In order to recognize a true religion it is necessary to look at three matters. In the first place, one must see what is the teaching of a religion concerning God. That is to say, what does a religion state with regard to the Unity, power, knowledge, perfection, greatness, punishment, mercy and other attributes of the Divine.....

Secondly, it is necessary that a seeker after truth should inquire what does a religion teach with regard to his own self and with regard to human conduct. Is there anything in its teaching which would disrupt human relationships, or would draw a person into courses which are inconsistent with modesty and honour, or would be contrary to the law of nature, or would be impossible to conform to or carry out, or make it dangerous to do so. It would also be necessary to see whether some important teaching needed to control disorderliness has been left out. It would also be necessary to discover whether a religion presents God as a Great Benefactor with Whom a relationship of personal love should be established and whether it lays down commandments which lead from darkness into light and from heedlessness to remembrance.

Thirdly, it is necessary for a seeker after truth to satisfy himself that the god presented by a religion should not be one who is believed in on the basis of tales and stories and resembles a dead being. To believe in a god who resembles a dead being, belief in whom is not by virtue of his having manifested himself but is due to one's own good faith, would be to put him under an obligation. It is

useless to believe in a god whose powers are not felt and who does not himself make manifest the signs of his own existence and life.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 373-374]

The religion that claims to be from God must show signs of being from God and should bear God's seal, which should attest the fact that it is from Him. Islām is such a religion. That God Who is hidden is known through this religion and manifests Himself to the true followers of this religion. A true religion is supported by the hand of God and through such religion God manifests Himself that He exists. The religions that depend entirely upon stories are only a form of idol worship. Such religions do not possess the spirit of truth. If God is alive as He was, and speaks and hears as He did, there is no reason why He should continue to be silent as if He does not exist. If He does not speak in this age, then equally and certainly He does not hear either. In other words, He is now nothing. That religion alone is true which demonstrates that God hears and speaks in this age also. In a true religion, God attests His existence through His speaking.

Search for God is a difficult matter. It is not an affair of worldly philosophers and wise men. Observation of the heavens and earth only leads to the conclusion that although orderliness indicates that the universe should have a Creator yet it is not proof that such a Creator in fact exists. There is a great deal of difference between **ought to be** and **is**. The Holy Qur'ān is the only book that sets forth His existence as a fact and not only urges the seeking of God but makes Him manifest. There is no other book which makes manifest the Hidden Being.

[Chashma-e-Masīḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 351-352]

Religion does not mean disputes, abuse and harsh words that are indulged in, in the name of religion. In this context, no one pays attention to the suppression of inner vices or the establishment of true relationship with the Beloved. One party attacks another party like dogs and every kind of ill conduct is exhibited in support of religion. Such people do not realize why they came into this world and what is the main purpose of their lives. They continue to be blind and ill-natured and give their bigoted sentiments the name of religion. They exhibit their bad manners and employ their loose tongues in support of a fictitious god of whose existence they have no proof. Of what use is a religion, which does not teach the worship of the Living God? The god that they present is no better than a corpse. He walks with the support of others; when that support is withdrawn, he falls to the ground. The only thing they gain from such a religion is bigotry. They lack altogether true fear of God and true sympathy with mankind, which is the best of characteristics.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21 p. 28]

Islām – the True Religion

Remember, to establish its truth, a religion which claims to be from God must prove its excellence in two respects: First of all, it should be so comprehensive, perfect, complete and free from every defect in its doctrine, teachings and commandments, that reason should not be capable of proposing anything better; and there should be nothing lacking in it. It should be ahead of all other religions in this respect. The Holy Qur'ān puts forward this claim by proclaiming:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا⁷

This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islam as religion.

This means that God requires us to conform to the reality inherent in the word Islām. Here there is a clear claim that the Holy Qur’ān comprehends the **perfect teaching** and that the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur’ān was the time when such perfect teaching could be revealed. The Qur’ān alone is entitled to make this claim. No other heavenly book has put forward such a claim. Both the Torah and the Gospel refrain from making this claim. On the contrary, the Torah sets out God’s commandment that:

“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, and put My words in his mouth and whosoever will not hearken unto My words I will require it of him.”⁸

It is obvious, therefore, that if the Torah had been adequate for meeting the needs of subsequent ages, there would have been no necessity for the coming of another Prophet, listening to whom was made obligatory. In the same way the Gospel has nowhere claimed that its teaching is **perfect** and **comprehensive**. But there is a clear confession that:

“I have yet many things to say, but ye cannot bear them now but that when the Paraclete is come he will lead you to the whole truth.”⁹

⁷ Al-Mā’idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

⁸ Deuteronomy, 18:18 [Publisher]

⁹ John 16:12-13 [Publisher]

Thus, Moses confessed the incompleteness of the Torah and drew attention to the teaching of the Prophet who was to come. In the same way, Jesus admitted the incompleteness of his teaching and said that the time had not yet come for the perfect teaching to be disclosed but that when the Paraclete arrives he would set forth the perfect teaching. In contrast the Holy Qur'ān does not, like the Torah and the Gospel, leave the matter for another book to complete but announces the perfection of its teaching in the words:

أَلْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي
وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا¹⁰

.....Here is thus a great argument in support of Islām that by virtue of its teaching it **prevails over every religion** and no religion can compete with it in respect of the perfection of its teaching.

The second kind of success, which is peculiar to Islām and not shared by any other religion, and which fully testifies to its truth, is that it manifests its living blessings and **miracles** of which other religions are wholly deprived. The signs that Islām exhibits not only establish its superiority over other religions but also enable it to draw the hearts of the people by exhibiting its **perfect light**. The first characteristic of Islām, which we have stated above, that is to say, the perfection of its teaching, is not quite conclusive in establishing that Islām is a true religion revealed by God. A bigoted opponent who is not far-sighted may assert that it is possible that a teaching might be perfect and yet it may not proceed from God Al-

¹⁰ 'This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you and have chosen for you Islām as religion.'—Al-Mā'idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

mighty. This first characteristic relieves a wise seeker after truth of many doubts and brings him close to certainty, but does not establish the matter conclusively and beyond doubt till it is combined with the second characteristic. When both these characteristics are combined, the light of the true faith reaches its perfection.

A true faith comprises thousands of proofs and lights but these two characteristics are enough to carry conviction to the heart of a seeker after truth and expound the matter to the **satisfaction** of all deniers of truth. Nothing more is needed in addition. I had originally intended that in support of the truth of Islām I would set down **three hundred arguments** in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*. But on further reflection I perceived that these two characteristics are a substitute for thousands of proofs and thus God made me alter my plan.

[*Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya*, Part V, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, Vol. 21, pp. 3-6]

God Almighty is not held back from exposition of the claim of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. He came like a sun and manifested his light from every point of view. He who turns away from this true sun, will come to no good. We cannot credit such a one with good faith. Can anyone who is afflicted with leprosy and whose limbs are corrupted with leprosy, claim that he is whole and is not in need of treatment? Should he say so, can we credit him with good faith? Should such a person insist that he cannot arrive at the truth of Islām, despite good faith and despite every effort such as he puts forth in his worldly affairs, his matter rests with God. We have not come across any such person and we consider it impossible that anyone equipped with reason and a sense of justice should prefer some

other faith to Islām. Foolish and ignorant people adopt the position under the dictates of their lower selves that belief in the Unity of God is enough, and that it is not necessary to follow the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]; but it is to be borne in mind that a Prophet is the mother of belief in Unity, who gives birth to it and points to the existence of God. Who knows the exposition of the truth better than God Almighty Himself? He filled heaven and earth with signs to prove the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and now in this age He has sent me and has displayed thousands of signs like heavy rain, which prove the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. What then is lacking in the full exposition of the truth? He who has sense enough to oppose why can he not think out the way of acceptance? He who pretends that he can see at night, why can he not see in the full light of day? Indeed the way of acceptance is much easier than the way of rejection.

The case of a person whose reason is defective and whose faculties are not normal should be committed to God, and we have nothing to do concerning him. He is like children who die at an early age. But a wicked denier cannot excuse himself on the ground that he is acting in good faith. It should be considered whether his faculties are such that he can appreciate questions of Unity and Prophethood. If he is capable of appreciating them and denies out of ill will, he cannot be excused. Can we excuse a person who observes the light of the sun and yet persists in asserting that it is not day but night? In the same way, we cannot excuse those who deliberately indulge in wrong reasoning and are unable to repel the arguments that are put forward on behalf of Islām. Islām

is a living faith. A person who can distinguish between the living and the dead, how can he set aside Islām and accept a dead religion?

[Haqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, pp. 180-181]

Progressive Development by Following Islām

When I reflect upon the Holy Word of God, I find that in its teachings it seeks to reform the natural conditions of man and to raise him step by step to higher spiritual levels. In the first place God desires to teach man the elementary rules of behaviour and culture and thus to change him from the wild condition of animals, and then to bestow upon him elementary moral conditions which can be described as culture or civilization. Then He trains him and raises him from the elementary moral conditions to a high moral stage. All this is in truth one stage, which is the reform of natural conditions, and the only difference is one of degree. The All-Wise One has presented the moral system in such a way whereby man should be able to move from a lower moral level to a higher moral level. The third stage is that man should be devoted to winning the true love and pleasure of his Creator and the whole of his being should be devoted to God. It is at this stage that the faith of Muslims has been named **Islām**, which means to be wholly devoted to God and to keep nothing back.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 10, p.324]

The Need for Islām

It is foolish to imagine that religion means a few things that are mentioned in the Gospel. All matters that are essential for the perfection of man are comprehended

within the scope of religion. Religion comprises all those matters which lead man from his wild condition to the condition of true humanity and then lead him from the condition of humanity to a life of wisdom and thereafter lead him from a life of wisdom to a life that is devoted to God.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, p. 89]

There is no doubt that the Gospel does not provide for the full nurture of the tree of humanity. We are sent into the world with many faculties and every faculty demands that it should be used on its proper occasion. The Gospel emphasizes only the faculty of meekness and gentleness. Meekness and forgiveness are good qualities when exercised on the proper occasion but their use on every occasion would be greatly harmful. Our cultural life, which comprises the interplay of different kinds of tempers, demands that we should exercise all our faculties with discretion on the proper occasion. It is true that, on some occasions, forgiveness and forbearance would benefit materially and spiritually a person who has done us harm. On other occasions, the exercise of those faculties would encourage the offender to commit greater mischief and to do more harm.

Our spiritual life resembles our physical life to a large degree. It is our experience that the use of only one type of food and medicines would upset our health. If we were to confine ourselves over a period to the use of cooling articles of diet and refrain altogether from the use of warming articles, we would become a prey to some diseases like paralysis, Parkinson's disease or epilepsy. On the contrary, if we confine ourselves to warming articles of diet, so much so that even the water that we drink

must be warm, then equally we would be liable to some other kind of disease. Consequently, in order to maintain our physical health we must keep a balance between hot and cold, hard and soft, and movement and rest. We should follow the same rule in respect of our spiritual health. God has bestowed no evil faculty upon us. Indeed no faculty is evil in itself; it is the misuse of a faculty that is evil. For instance, envy is evil but if we use it for a good purpose, that is to say, as a competition in goodness, it becomes a high moral quality. The same is the case with all moral qualities. Their misuse renders them harmful and their use on proper occasion in a moderate manner makes them beneficial.

It is, therefore, a mistake to cut off all other branches of the tree of humanity and to put the entire emphasis on forgiveness and forbearance. That is why this teaching has failed in its purpose and Christian sovereigns had to enact codes of law for the punishment of offenders. The current Gospels cannot bring about the perfection of the human self. As the stars are dimmed when the sun rises and then disappear from sight altogether, the same is the case of the Gospel in comparison with the Holy Qur'ān.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 66-67]

A study of the religions of the world reveals that every religion, except Islām, contains some mistake or the other. This is not because they were all false in their origin, but because after the advent of Islām, God gave up the support of other religions. They became like neglected gardens, which had no gardener to look after them, and for the irrigation and upkeep of which no arrangement had been made, so that gradually they began to decay. Their fruit-bearing trees became dry and barren,

and thorns and weeds spread all over. Those religions lost all spirituality, which is at the root of all religions, and nothing was left but bare words.

God did not allow this to happen in the case of Islām, as He desired that this garden should flourish throughout. He made provision in each century for its irrigation and thus rescued it from decay. Although at the beginning of each century, when a man of God was appointed for its reform, the ignorant people opposed him and were averse to the reform of anything which had become part of their habits and customs, yet God Almighty adhered throughout to His way. In these latter days also, which is the time of the last battle between guidance and error, finding the Muslims heedless and neglectful in the beginning of the fourteenth century, God recalled His promise and made provision for the revival of Islām. But other faiths were never revived after the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and they all died. There was no spiritual life in them and errors took root in them, as dirt accumulates in a garment which is much in use but which is never washed. People who had no concern with spirituality and who were not free from the stains of earthly existence corrupted these faiths to a degree that they no longer resemble the originals.

Consider the case of Christianity, how pure was its origin. The teaching set forth by Jesus was not perfect as compared with the teachings of the Qur’ān, because the time had not yet come for the revelation of the perfect teaching and people were not yet strong enough to bear it, yet that teaching was an excellent one and was appropriate for its own time. It guided to the same God to Whom the Torah guided; but after Jesus, the god of the

Christians became another god who found no mention in the Torah and was not at all known to the children of Israel. Belief in this new god upset the whole system of the Torah and all the guidance contained in the Torah for deliverance from sin and attaining true salvation and a pure life was frustrated. Salvation and deliverance from sin now depended upon the confession that Jesus had accepted crucifixion for the sake of the salvation of mankind, and that he was the very God Himself. Many permanent laws of the Torah were abrogated and the Christian faith was so changed that if Jesus were to come back to the earth he would not be able to recognize it.

It is a matter of surprise that the people who were admonished to adhere to the Torah set aside its commandments at one stroke. For instance, it is nowhere stated in the Gospel that though the Torah forbids the eating of the flesh of swine yet it is now permitted, nor does the Gospel say that though circumcision is prescribed in the Torah yet that commandment is now abrogated. But all this was done and that which had never been said by Jesus became part of religion. However, as it was God's design to establish a universal religion, namely Islām, the decay of Christianity was an indication of the appearance of Islām.

It is also well established that Hindūism had been corrupted before the advent of Islām and that throughout India idol worship had become common. Part of this corruption resulted in the doctrine that God Who is not dependent upon matter for the exercise of His attributes is, according to the Āryās, essentially dependent on the availability of matter for the creation of the universe. This led to another false doctrine that all particles of mat-

ter and all souls are eternal and uncreated. Had they considered deeply the attributes of God, they would never have said so; for if in the exercise of His eternal attribute of creation, God is dependent on matter like a human being, then how is it that in the exercise of the attribute of hearing and seeing He is not so dependent as man is. Man cannot hear without the agency of air and he cannot see without the aid of light. Then is God also dependent upon light and air for seeing and hearing? If He is not so dependent, be sure that He is not dependent upon matter for the exercise of His attribute of creation. It is entirely false that He is dependent upon matter for the exercise of any of His attributes. It is a great mistake to attribute human weaknesses to God; for instance, that He cannot create something from nothing. Man's being is limited and God's Being is unlimited. By the power of His Being, He can create another being. This is the essence of Godhead. He is not dependent upon matter for the exercise of any of His attributes, for had that been so, He would not be God. Nothing can obstruct Him. If He were to desire to create a heaven and earth instantly, He would be able to do so. Of the Hindūs those who, in addition to knowledge, partook of spirituality also and were not committed to bare logic, never believed that concerning God which the Āryās set forth today. This is the result of the lack of spirituality altogether.

All this corruption, some of which is unmentionable and is opposed to human purity, was an indication of the need of Islām. Every reasonable person is bound to confess that a short while before Islām, all other faiths had become corrupt and had lost all spirituality. The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a **great reformer** in the cause of truth who restored the lost

verities to the world. No Prophet shares with him the pride that he found the whole world in darkness and by his advent that darkness gave place to light.

[Lecture Siālkot, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 203-206]

Perfect Reality of Islām

First of all, it is necessary to set out what is **the reality of Islām**, what are the means of arriving at that reality and what are the fruits of following that reality; for this knowledge is essential for the purpose of understanding many mysteries. It would be of great benefit for our opponents from among the Muslims that they should study these matters with attention, for many of the doubts which assail their minds are the result of their failure to reflect upon the complete and **perfect reality of Islām**, its sources and its fruits..... The opponents of religion also would benefit greatly by this study. They would understand what **religion** is and what are the signs of its truth.

In the idiom of Arabic, **Islām** means money paid as earnest to conclude a bargain, or to commit some affair to someone, or to seek peace, or to surrender a claim or point.

The technical meaning of **Islām** is set out in the verse:

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ¹¹

This means that a Muslim is one who commits himself wholly to the cause of God Almighty; that is to say, one who devotes himself to God Almighty, to following His designs and to winning His pleasure, and then becomes steadfast in doing good for the sake of God Almighty and

¹¹ Al-Baqarah, 2:113 [Publisher]

devotes all his faculties to that cause. In other words, he belongs entirely to God Almighty both doctrinally and in practice.

Doctrinal belonging means that one should esteem one's being as something which has been created for the recognition of God Almighty and His obedience and the seeking of His love and pleasure.

Practical belonging means to do all the good that is related to every one of one's faculties with such eagerness and attention as if one beholds the countenance of the True Beloved in the mirror of one's obedience.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 57-58]

The reality of **Islām** is to present one's neck to God like the sacrificial lamb; to give up one's own designs and to be devoted to the designs of God and His pleasure; to lose oneself in God and to impose a type of death upon oneself; to be dyed in the personal love of God and to obey Him entirely for the sake of that love; to obtain eyes that see only through Him, and to obtain ears that hear only through Him, and to develop a heart that should be wholly devoted to Him, and to obtain a tongue which would speak only at His command. This is a stage where all search ends; human faculties complete their functions and man's ego dies completely. Thereupon Divine mercy confers a new life upon the seeker through His living words and His shining light. He is honoured with the delightful converse of God. A fine light, which is not discoverable by reason and is not recognizable by the eyes, approaches close to his heart, as is said by God:

وَتَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ¹²

¹² Qāf, 50:17 [Publisher]

We are nearer to him than even his jugular vein.

In this manner, God honours mortal man with His nearness. Then the time comes when blindness is removed and eyes are given insight and man beholds God with his new eyes, hears His voice and finds himself wrapped in the mantle of His light. Thus, the purpose of religion is fulfilled and having beheld God, man casts aside the dirty garment of his lower life and puts on a garment of light. He waits for a sight of God and of heaven not merely as a promise to be fulfilled in the hereafter, but in this very life. He achieves the bounties of sight and converse and heaven. As Allāh the Exalted has stated:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَبْشُرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ¹³

This means that: Angels descend upon those who affirm that their God is the One Who possesses all perfect attributes and Who has no associate in His Being or His attributes, and after their affirmation, they are steadfast and no earthquake and calamity and no confrontation of death can shake their faith. God speaks to them and reassures them not to be afraid of calamities or of enemies and not to be sorrowful over past misfortunes. He reassures them that He is with them and that He has bestowed upon them in this very world the paradise that was promised to them in which they should rejoice.

These are not statements without testimony, nor are they promises that have not been fulfilled. Thousands of the faithful in Islām have tasted of the spiritual paradise that is promised in this verse. The true followers of Islām have been made heirs by Almighty God to all the previ-

¹³ Ḥā Mīm Al-Sajdah, 41:31 [Publisher]

ous righteous ones, and bounties that were bestowed upon them have been bestowed upon the Muslims.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 160-161]

A person can be held to be a Muslim when the whole of his being together with all his faculties, physical and spiritual, is devoted to God Almighty, and the trusts that are committed to him by God Almighty are rendered back to the True Giver. He should demonstrate his being a Muslim not only doctrinally but also in practice. In other words, a person claiming to be a Muslim should prove that his hands and feet, heart and mind, reason and understanding, anger and compassion, meekness and knowledge, all his physical and spiritual faculties, honour and property, comfort and delight, and whatever pertains to him from the top of his head to the soles of his feet together with his motives, fears and passions, have all been subordinated to Almighty God as a person's limbs are subordinated to him. It should be proved that his sincerity has reached a stage in which whatever is his does not belong to him but to God Almighty, and that all his limbs and faculties have become so devoted to the service of God as if they had become the **limbs of the Divine**.

Reflection on these verses¹⁴ shows clearly that devoting one's life to the cause of God Almighty, which is the essence of Islām, has two aspects.

First, that God Almighty should become one's object of worship and true goal and love, and that worship, love, fear and hope should be for God alone, to the exclusion of all others. All the commandments related to His holiness, glory and worship, all the limits set by Him, and all

¹⁴ The reference is to verse Al-Baqarah, 2:113 [Translator]

heavenly decrees should be totally and sincerely accepted. All these commandments, limits, laws and decrees should be accepted in great humility. All the truths and understandings, which are the means of appreciating His vast powers and of finding out the greatness of His kingdom and His sovereignty and are a guide for the recognition of His favours and bounties, should be fully ascertained.

The second aspect of devoting one's life to the cause of God Almighty is that one's life should be devoted to the service of His creatures and to sympathy with them and to sharing their burdens and sorrows. One should suffer pain to bring them comfort, and one should experience grief to bring them consolation.

This shows that **the reality of Islām is a very superior thing** and that no one can truly deserve the title of Muslim till he surrenders the whole of his being to God, together with all his faculties, desires, and designs and till he begins to tread along His path withdrawing altogether from his ego and all its attendant qualities. A person will be truly called a Muslim only when his heedless life undergoes a **total revolution** and his evil-directing self, together with all its passions, is wiped out altogether and he is invested with a new life which is characterized by his carrying out all his obligations to Allāh and which should comprise nothing except obedience to the Creator and sympathy for His creatures.

Obedience to the Creator means that in order to make manifest His Honour, Glory and Unity, one should be ready to endure every dishonour and humiliation, and one should be eager to undergo a thousand deaths in order to uphold His Unity. One hand should be ready to cut

off the other with pleasure in obedience to Him, and the love of the grandeur of His commandments and the thirst for seeking His pleasure should make sin so hateful as if it were a consuming fire, or a fatal poison, or an obliterating lightning, from which one must run away with all one's power. For seeking His pleasure one must surrender all the desires of one's ego; and to establish a relationship with Him one should be ready to endure all kinds of injuries; and to prove such relationship one must break off all other relationships.

The service of one's fellow-beings means to strive for their benefit purely for the sake of God in all their needs, and in all the relationships of mutual dependence which God has established out of true and selfless sympathy for them. All in need of help should be helped out of one's God-given capacity and one must do his best for their betterment both in this world and in the hereafter.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 59- 62]

Blessings of Islām

I would now wish to enlarge upon the fruits of Islām. Let it be clear that when a true seeker lives Islām in full, and each one of his faculties, without any affectation or pretence, spontaneously begins to tread the path of God Almighty, the result of his efforts is that the higher manifestations of Divine guidance, freed from all intervening veils, hasten towards him. Diverse types of blessings descend upon him. The commandments and doctrines, which were accepted on faith and as hearsay, are now experienced by him as realities and certainties through true visions, and definite and unambiguous revelation. The mysteries of the faith and the law are revealed to him

and he is afforded a view of the Divine kingdom so that he should arrive at the stage of perfect certainty and understanding. A blessing characterizes his tongue and his words and all his actions and his movements. He is bestowed extraordinary courage and steadfastness and his understanding is expanded at a high level. The characteristic failing of humankind, meanness, miserliness, the tendency towards frequent stumbling, short-sightedness, proneness towards passion, lowliness of behaviour and every darkness of his ego are totally removed from him and he is filled with the light of Divine attributes. Thereupon, he undergoes an entire change and puts on the garment of a new birth. He hears through God Almighty, sees through Him, moves with Him and stops with Him. His anger becomes the wrath of God Almighty, and his compassion becomes the compassion of God Almighty.

When he arrives at that stage, his prayers are heard as a mark of his having been chosen, and not merely as a trial; and he becomes the proof of God on earth and personifies security from God. There is joy in heaven on his account and the highest gift that is bestowed upon him is the word of God which descends upon his heart free from any doubt, like the light of the moon shining through without any mistiness. It carries an effective sense of delight with it and bestows satisfaction, comfort and security. The difference between this converse with God and revelation is that revelation is like a perennial spring that flows continuously to the chosen ones of God. They speak, see and hear with the Holy Spirit and all other intentions are born of the breath of the Holy Spirit. The truth of the matter is that they become the reflection and embodiment of the Qur'ānic verse:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ ۚ إِنْ هُوَ إِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُوحَىٰ ۝¹⁵

But converse with God is different. It means that the word of God descends upon them in the form of verbal revelation. They hear the response to their questions from God such as a friend receives from a friend. We can only define it by saying that it is a special manifestation of God the Glorious, which is conveyed through a favourite angel. Its purpose is to give intimation of the acceptance of prayer, or to communicate a new or secret matter, or to make aware of something that is to happen in the future, or to convey God's pleasure or lack of it concerning any matter, or to create certainty and understanding concerning some matter. It is a Divine voice that manifests itself in the form of converse in order to create understanding and satisfaction. It is not possible to define it any more than to say that it is a voice which proceeds from God and is experienced in delicious words full of blessings, which is not induced by any thinking or reflection or any intrusion of self and is blessed with a Divine manifestation and Divine majesty.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 226-233]

I believe in Islām alone as a true religion and consider all other faiths as bundles of falsehood. I perceive that by believing in Islām fountains of light are coursing through me. Through the love of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], I have arrived at that high stage of converse with the Divine and of acceptance of prayer which can only be achieved by a follower of the true Prophet and by no other. If the Hindūs and the

¹⁵ 'Nor does he speak out of his own desire. It is nothing but pure revelation that has been revealed by God.'—Al-Najm, 53:4-5 [Publisher]

Christians and others were to supplicate their false gods, even unto death, they could not achieve that stage.

I hear the words of God, which the others believe in only as a theory. I have been shown and have been told and have been made to understand that Islām alone is the true faith in the world, and it has been disclosed to me that I have received all this through the blessing of following the *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'* [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and that the equal of it cannot be achieved in any other religion for they are all false.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 275-276]

God be thanked a thousand times, Who has bestowed upon us a religion, which is such a means of attaining to the knowledge of God and to the fear of God, as has had no equal in any age. Thousands of blessings be upon the immaculate Prophet^{SA} through whom we have entered this faith and thousands of Divine mercies be bestowed upon his companions who irrigated this garden with their blood.

Islām is such a blessed and God-indicating religion that if a person follows it truly and acts upon the teachings, guidance and admonitions contained in the Holy Word of God Almighty, the Holy Qur'ān, he would behold God in this very life. For the recognition of God, Who is hidden from the sight of the world behind thousands of screens, there is no other means except the teachings of the Qur'ān. The Holy Qur'ān guides towards God Almighty through reason and heavenly signs in a very easy manner. It comprehends a blessing and a magnetic power, which draws a seeker of God every moment towards God and bestows light, comfort and satisfaction. A true believer in the Holy Qur'ān does not merely contemplate

like philosophers that there ought to be a Creator of this wonderful universe; he acquires a personal insight and, being honoured with a holy vision, he sees with the eye of certainty that that Creator in fact exists. He who is bestowed the light of this Holy Word does not merely guess like those who rely upon reason alone that God is One, without associate. But through hundreds of shining signs which take him by the hand and lead him out of the darkness, such a person learns for himself that God has no associate in His Being or in His attributes. He is able to demonstrate to the world that he believes God to be such a Unity. The majesty of the Unity of God so fills his heart that in comparison with the Divine will, he regards the whole world as no more than a dead insect and indeed as nothing at all.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, pp. 25-26]

Continued Beneficence of Islām

The God of a true religion should be so much in accord with reason and the light of nature that His existence should be a matter of proof for people who possess reason but who have no heavenly book in which they believe. He should be such as does not savour of coercion or artificiality. Such perfection is characteristic of the God Who is presented by the Holy Qur'ān. The followers of other religions have either abandoned the True God, as have the Christians, or have attributed improper and low attributes to Him, as have the Jews, or have deprived Him of His attributes, as have the pagans and the Āryās. **The God of Islām is the same True God Who is seen through the mirror of the law of nature and is visible in the book of nature.** Islām has not presented a new God but has presented the same God Who is presented by the light of

man's heart and by man's conscience and **by heavens and earth.**

Another quality of a true religion is that it **should not be a dead creed.** The blessings and greatnesses which were cultivated in it in the beginning should persist in it till the end of the world for the promotion of the welfare of mankind, so that ever fresh signs should confirm its past signs and should not permit the light of its truth to become an old tale. I have been writing over a long period that the Prophethood which was claimed by our lord and master Muḥammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and the **heavenly proofs** in the form of signs which he had set forth, **still continue in Islām** and are bestowed upon his followers so that they should arrive at the state of complete understanding and should **witness the Living God** directly.

The signs which are attributed to **Jesus** are mere stories, and are nowhere to be seen, and therefore this religion, which teaches the worship of the dead, is itself dead like its god. A verity cannot be confined to old tales. Every people have a store of tales setting forth alleged miracles and wonders. It is a characteristic only of **Islām** that it does not present merely the defective and imperfect comfort of tales and stories, but **satisfies** the seekers with living signs.

A seeker after truth should not be satisfied with senseless worship of the dead and should not be put off with sorry tales. We have come into the market of the world to purchase the best. We should not waste our faith by exchanging it with false things. A living faith is that through which we can find **the Living God. The Living God is He Who can inspire us** directly, or could at least bring us

in contact with one who is directly inspired. I convey this **good news** to the whole world that the **God of Islām is such a Living God**. Those with whom no one can now speak are dead and are not God. No one can see their signs to-day. He whose god is dead would be put to shame in every field and would be humiliated and would not be helped in any way.

My purpose in making this **announcement** is that a religion which is true does not change. As it was in the beginning, so it would be at the end. A true religion would never become a dry tale. **Islām is a true religion** and I call everyone—Christians, Āryās, Jews and Brahmūs—to show them the truth of Islām. Is there anyone of them who seeks the Living God? We do not worship the dead. Our God is Living. He helps us through His inspiration and revelation and through heavenly signs. If there is a single **Christian who is truly a seeker after truth, let him make a comparison between our Living God and his dead god. For such a trial, a period of forty days would suffice.**

[Majmū‘a Ishtihārāt, Vol. 2, pp. 310-312]

Enduring Signs of the Truth of Islām

The Islām whose qualities we have set out is not something for proof of which we have to refer only to the past and have to point only to the ruins of tombs. Islām is not a dead faith so that it may be said that all its blessings have been left behind and there is nothing ahead. The principal quality of Islām is that its blessings always accompany it. It does not speak only of the past but offers present blessings as well. The world is always in need of blessings and heavenly signs. It is not as if it needed them in the past and does not need them now.

A weak and helpless human being who is born like a

blind is in need of knowing something of the heavenly kingdom and needs to see some signs of the existence and power of God in Whom he believes. The signs of a past age cannot suffice for a subsequent age, for hearing is not the same as seeing and, by the passage of time, past events become like stories. Every new century, in a manner of speaking, starts a new world. Therefore, the God of Islām, Who is the True God, manifests new signs for each new world. At the beginning of each century, especially at the beginning of a century which has strayed far away from faith and integrity and is enveloped in many darknesses, He raises a substitute Prophet in the mirror of whose nature is exhibited the form of a Prophet. Such a one demonstrates to the world the excellences of the Prophet whose follower he is and convicts all opponents through the truth and the display of reality and the frustration of falsehood.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 245-247]

The sign of a true religion is that through its teaching such righteous ones should continue to arise who should arrive at the stage of a *Muḥaddath* to whom God Almighty should speak face to face. The first and foremost sign of the truth of Islām is that at all times it produces such righteous ones with whom God Almighty talks:

تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا¹⁶

This alone is the test of a true, living and acceptable religion. We know that this light is to be found only in Islām and that the Christian faith is without such light.

[Hujjat-ul-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 6, p. 43]

¹⁶ Angels descend on them, saying: 'Fear ye not, nor grieve.'—Ḥā Mīm Al-Sajdah, 41:31 [Publisher]

We can furnish conclusive proof to every seeker after truth that from the time of our lord and master the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] up to this day, in every century there have appeared men of God through whom God Almighty has guided other people by the display of heavenly signs. Of these were Sayyed ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Jilānī, Abu-al-Ḥasan Kharqānī, Abū Yazīd Bisṭāmī, Junaid Baghdādī, Moḥy-ud-Dīn Ibn-e-‘Arabī, Dhunnūn Miṣrī, Mu‘īn-ud-Dīn Chishtī Ajmerī, Quṭb-ud-Dīn Bakhtiār Kākī, Farīd-ud-Dīn Pākpatnī, Niẓām-ud-Dīn Dehlvi, Shāh Walī-ullāh Dehlvi, and Sheikh Aḥmad Sarhandī (Allāh is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him). Their number exceeded thousands. So many extraordinary happenings concerning them are set out in the books of the learned ones that even a very bigoted opponent has to admit that these people manifested extraordinary signs and miracles. I tell you truly that through my research, so far as it is possible for one to discover about the past, I have come to the conclusion that the number of heavenly signs in support of Islām and as a testimony of the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which have been manifested through the *Auliya*’ of this Ummah, is not to be equalled in the history of other religions. Islām is the only religion which has progressed through heavenly signs, and its numberless lights and blessings have ever demonstrated the existence of God Almighty as if He is visible close at hand.

Be sure that on the score of its heavenly signs Islām has not been put to shame in any age. In this age of yours, you could, if you wished, be the witnesses of signs in support of Islām. Say truly: have you not witnessed signs in support of Islām in your own age? Is there any other

religion in the world that can produce such testimony? These indeed are the reasons which have broken the back of Christian missionaries. He whom they set up as god has nothing in his support except a few meaningless tales and false narratives.

The signs of the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], whom they reject, are visible in this age like pouring rain. For seekers the gates of heavenly signs are as open today as they were in any previous age, and for those who are hungry after truth the banquet of bounties is as much available today as it was before. A living faith is as much available today as it was before. A living faith has always the hand of the Living God at its back and such a faith is Islām.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 91-92]

If anyone should have a question that there are hundreds of false religions which have flourished through thousands of years, though they must have originated in some imposture, the answer is as follows. According to us, imposture means that a person should himself fashion deliberately a few sentences, or should invent a book claiming that it has been revealed to him by God Almighty whereas nothing of the kind has been revealed to him. We can affirm on the basis of full research that such imposture has never been able to flourish in any age. The Book of God bears clear testimony that those who were guilty of imposture against God Almighty were soon destroyed. We have already stated that the same testimony is borne by the Torah, the Gospel and the Holy Qur'ān.

The false religions that we observe in the world today like those of the Hindūs and the Zoroastrians do not rep-

resent the dispensations of false prophets. The truth is that their followers through their own mistakes have fallen into accepting their current doctrines. You cannot point to any book which claims clearly that it is a divine book while in truth, it might be an imposture and a whole people might have held it in honour throughout. It is, however, possible that a Divine book might have been misinterpreted. A political government seizes jealously a person who falsely claims to be a government official. Then, why would God, Who is jealous of His glory and His kingdom, not seize a false claimant?

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 11, pp. 63-64, footnote]

Allāh

The Exalted

**Glory be to Him and
Hallowed be His Name**

“This wealth is worth acquiring,
even at the cost of one’s life.”

2

ALLAH THE EXALTED

Personal Experience with God

The God Who has manifested Himself to all the Prophets, and appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai and appeared to Jesus on Mount Seir and shone forth to Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Al-lāh be on him] on Mount Pārān, the same Mighty and Holy God has manifested Himself to me. He has talked to me and has said: I am the High Being to establish Whose worship all the Prophets were sent. I alone am the Creator and the Master and have no associate. I am not subject to birth or death.

[Government Angreẓī aur Jihād, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 17, p. 29]

The pure life that is free from sin is a **brilliant ruby** which no one possesses today. **God Almighty has bestowed that brilliant ruby on me and He has commissioned me that I should inform the world of the way in which that brilliant ruby might be acquired.** I affirm with confidence that by treading on this path everyone would certainly acquire it. The only way in which it might be acquired is the **true recognition of God**; but this is a difficult and delicate matter. A philosopher, as I have said already, contemplating the heavens and earth and reflecting on the perfect orderliness of the universe, merely states that there ought to be a Creator. **But I lead to a higher stage and affirm on the basis of my personal experience that God is.**

[Malfūẓāt, Vol. III, p. 16]

Our paradise lies in our God. Our highest delight is in our God for we have seen Him and have found every beauty in Him. This wealth is worth procuring though one might have to lay down one's life to procure it. This ruby is worth purchasing though one may have to lose oneself to acquire it. **O ye, who are bereft! run to this fountain and it will satisfy you.** It is the fountain of life that will save you. What shall I do, and how shall I impress the hearts with this good news, and by beating what **drum** shall I make the **announcement** that this is our God, so that people might hear? What remedy shall I apply to the ears of the people so that they should listen?

[Kashtī Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 21-22]

The Grace of God Covers Everything

God is the light of the heavens and the earth. Every light that is visible on the heights or in the valleys, whether in souls or in bodies, whether personal or impersonal, whether apparent or hidden, whether in the mind or outside it, is a bounty of His grace. This is an indication that the general grace of the Lord of the worlds envelops everything and nothing is deprived of that grace. He is the source of all grace, the ultimate cause of all lights and the fountainhead of all mercies. His Being is the support of the universe and is the refuge of all high and low. He it is Who brought everything out of the darkness of nothingness and bestowed upon everything the mantle of being. No other being than Him is in himself present and eternal or is not the recipient of His grace. Earth and heaven, man and animals, stones and trees, souls and bodies, have all come into existence by His grace.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 191-192, footnote]

God of Islām Visible in Nature and Perceived by Human Hearts

The **God of Islām** is the same God Who is visible in the **mirror of the law of nature** and is discernible in the **book of nature**. Islām has not presented a new God but has presented the same God Who is presented by the light of man's heart, by the conscience of man, and by **heaven and earth**.

[Majmū'a Ishtihārāt, Vol. II, pp. 310-311]

Our soul and every particle of our being are prostrate before the Mighty, True and Perfect God from Whose hand every soul and every particle of creation together with all its faculties came into being, and through Whose support every being is sustained. Nothing is outside His knowledge, outside His control, or outside His creation. We call thousands of blessings and peace and mercy on the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] through whom we have found the Living God Who gives us proof of His existence through His Word. He demonstrates to us through extraordinary signs His shining countenance which possesses eternal and perfect power. We found the Messenger^{SA} who manifested God to us and we found the God Who created everything through His perfect power. How majestic is His power that nothing came into being without it and nothing can continue to exist without its support. That True God of ours possesses numberless blessings, numberless powers, numberless beauties and beneficences. There is no other God beside Him.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, p. 363]

The Being of God is transcendental and beyond the beyond and is most secret and cannot be discovered by the

power of human reasoning alone. No argument can prove it conclusively, inasmuch as reason can travel only so far that contemplating the universe it feels the need of a Creator. But the feeling of a need is one thing and it is quite another to arrive at the certainty that the God, Whose need has been felt, does in fact exist. As the operation of reason is defective, incomplete and doubtful, a philosopher cannot recognize God purely through reason. Most people who try to determine the existence of God Almighty purely through the exercise of reason, in the end become atheists. Reflecting over the creation of the heavens and the earth does not avail them much and they begin to deride and laugh at the men of God. One of their arguments is that there are thousands of things in the world which have no use and the fashioning of which does not indicate the existence of a fashioner. They exist merely as vain and useless things. These people do not seem to realize that lack of knowledge of something does not necessarily negate its existence.

There are millions of people in the world who regard themselves as very wise philosophers and who utterly deny the existence of God. It is obvious that if they had discovered a strong reason for the existence of God, they would not have denied it. If they had discovered a conclusive argument in support of the existence of God, they would not have rejected it shamelessly and in derision. It is obvious, therefore, that no one boarding the ark of the philosophers can find deliverance from the storm of doubts, but is bound to be drowned, and such a one would never have access to the drinking of pure Unity.

Belief in the Unity of God Established through the Holy Prophet^{SA}

It is a false and stinking notion that belief in the Unity of God can be achieved otherwise than through the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]; nor can man achieve salvation without it. How can there be faith in the Unity of God unless there is perfect certainty with regard to His existence? Be sure, therefore, that belief in the Unity of God can be achieved only through a Prophet, as our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] convinced the atheists and pagans of Arabia of the existence of God Almighty by showing them thousands of heavenly signs. Up till today, the true and perfect followers of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] present those signs to the atheists.

The truth is that till a person observes the living powers of the Living God, Satan does not depart from his heart, nor does true Unity enter into it, nor can he believe with certainty in the existence of God. This holy and perfect Unity is appreciated only through the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, pp. 120-121]

It is not within the power of man to comprehend all the activities of the Divine, as they are above reason, intellect and imagination. A man should not be proud of his pittance of knowledge that he has to some degree comprehended the system of cause and effect, inasmuch as that knowledge of his is very limited, as if it were a millionth part of one drop out of the ocean. The truth is that as God Almighty Himself is unbounded His activities are unbounded also. It is beyond and above human power to

reach the reality of every activity of God.

Contemplating His eternal attributes we can, however, affirm that as Divine attributes have never fallen into disuse, therefore, in God's creation, some species have always existed in one form or the other; but any eternal personal coexistence (with God—Ed.) is false. It is to be remembered that, like His attribute of creation, His attribute of destruction has always been in operation all the time and that also has never fallen into disuse.

The philosophers have put forth every effort to bring the creation of heavenly and earthly bodies within the purview of their physical laws and to establish the source of all creation, but they have utterly failed to do so. Whatever they have gathered together as the result of their physical research is quite incomplete and defective. That is why they have not been able to adhere to their theories throughout and have always changed them about. As their research is confined entirely to their reason and speculation and they receive no help from God, they cannot emerge out of their darkness. No one can truly recognize God till he understands that there are numberless activities of the Divine which are far beyond and above human power, reason, and speculation. Before reaching this stage of understanding, a person is either an atheist and has no faith in God, or if he does believe in God, that god is the result of his own reasoning and is not the God Who manifests His Own Being and the mysteries of Whose powers are so numerous that human reason cannot encompass them. Since God has bestowed upon me the knowledge that His powers are wonderful, that they have depth upon depth and are beyond of beyond, and are outside comprehension, I have always considered

the philosophers to be rank disbelievers and secret atheists. It is my personal observation, and I have had experience of such wonderful Divine powers, that we can only describe them as something coming into existence out of non-existence. I have described some instances of these signs at some other places. He who has not observed this wonder of Divine power has observed nothing. We do not believe in a god whose powers are limited by our reason and speculation and there is nothing beyond. We believe in the God Whose powers, like His Being, are unlimited, unconfined, and unending.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 280-282]

God's Beauty, Beneficence and Unity taught by the Holy Qur'ān

The Holy Qur'ān comprises teachings which work towards endearing God. They exhibit His beauties and remind us of His beneficence, inasmuch as love is created either by the observation of beauty or by the remembrance of beneficence. The Qur'ān teaches that by virtue of His excellences God is One, without associate. He suffers from no defect. He comprehends all good qualities and manifests all holy powers. He is the Originator of all creation and is the fountainhead of all grace. He is the Master of all recompense and everything returns to Him. He is near and yet far, and He is far and yet near. He is above all, but it cannot be said that there is someone below Him. He is more hidden than everything else is but it cannot be said that there is something more manifest than Him. He is Self-Existing in His Being and everything is alive through Him. He is Self-Sustaining and everything is sustained by Him. He supports everything and there is nothing that supports Him. There is

nothing that has come into being on its own, or can live without Him on its own. He comprehends everything, but it cannot be said what is the nature of that comprehension. He is the Light of everything in heaven and earth and every light has shone forth from His hand and is a reflection of His Being. He is the Providence of the universe. There is no soul that is not sustained by Him and exists by itself. No soul has any power which it has not obtained from Him and which exists by itself.

Two Kinds of Divine Mercy

His mercy is of two kinds. One, which has been eternally manifested without being the result of any action on the part of anyone. For instance, heaven and earth, the sun, moon and planets, water, fire and air, and all the particles of the universe which were created for our comfort, and all those things that were needed by us, were provided before our coming into being. All this was done when we were not even present. No action had proceeded from us. Who can say that the sun was created on account of some action of his, or that the earth was created in consequence of some good action of his? This is the mercy which came into operation before the creation of man and is not the result of anyone's actions. The second kind of Divine mercy comes into operation in consequence of human action. This needs no illustration.

Allāh is Free from All Defects

The Holy Qur'ān sets forth that God is free from all defects and is not subject to any loss; and He desires that man should purify himself from defects by acting upon His instructions. He has said:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَى فَمَوِي الْأَخِرَةِ أَعْمَى¹⁷

This means that: He who has no insight in this world and is not able to behold the Peerless Being, will be blind after death and will be enveloped in darkness, inasmuch as man is bestowed insight in this life with which to see God and he who will not take that insight with him from this world, will not be able to see God in the hereafter.

God Almighty has made it clear in this verse what progress He desires man to achieve and how far man can proceed by following His teaching. God sets forth in the Holy Qur'ān the teaching by following which a person can see God in this very life. As Allāh says:

مَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَادِقًا
وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا¹⁸

This means that: He who desires to see God—who is the True Creator—in this very life, should act righteously.

That is to say, his conduct should exhibit no default and his actions should not be for show, nor should he take pride in them that he is such and such, nor should his actions be defective and incomplete, nor should they smell of anything which is inconsistent with his personal love of God. All his actions should breathe sincerity and faithfulness. He should abstain from associating anything with God. He should worship neither sun nor moon, nor stars, nor air, nor fire, nor water, nor any other thing whatsoever. He should not exalt worldly means so as to depend upon them as if they were God's associates, nor should he depend upon his own enterprise and effort, for this is also a species of association. Having done every-

¹⁷ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

¹⁸ Al-Kahf, 18:111 [Publisher]

thing, he should consider that he has done nothing. He should have no pride in his knowledge, nor have dependence upon his actions. He should consider himself truly ignorant and slothful and his soul should be prostrate all the time at the threshold of God Almighty. He should draw the grace of God to himself through his supplications. He should become like a person who is thirsty and is helpless and finds a fountain spring forth in front of him, the water of which is clear and sweet, and he crawls up to the fountain and applies his lips to it and does not let go till he is fully satisfied.

In the Holy Qur'ān, our God describes His attributes thus:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۝ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ¹⁹

This means that: Your God is One in His Being and in His attributes. No other being is eternal and everlasting and self-existing like His Being, nor are the attributes of any being like His attributes.

A person's knowledge needs a teacher and yet is limited. God's knowledge needs no teacher and is unlimited. A person's hearing is dependent upon air and is limited, but God's hearing is inherent and is unlimited. A person's seeing is dependent upon the light of the sun or some other light and is limited, but God's seeing is by His inherent light and is unlimited. The power of man to create is dependent upon some matter, needs time and is limited. God's power to create is neither dependent on any matter nor does it need time and is unlimited. All His attributes are without equal and as He has no equal in His

¹⁹ Al-Ikhlās, 112:2-5 [Publisher]

Being, no one is His equal in His attributes. If one of His attributes were to be defective, all His attributes would be defective and therefore His Unity cannot be established unless He were without any equal in His attributes as He is without any equal in His Being. He is not anyone's son, nor is anyone His son. He is Self-Sufficient and needs neither father nor son. This is the Unity which the Holy Qur'ān teaches and which is the basis of our faith.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 152-155]

God has commanded me to inform the members of my Community that those who have believed with a faith which contains nothing of the world in it, and which is not coloured by hypocrisy or cowardice, and does not fall short of any degree of obedience, are the people who are approved by God, and God says that they are the ones whose feet are planted firmly on sincerity.

Let him who has ears hear what it is that God desires of you. It is that you should become wholly His and should not associate anyone with Him in heaven or in earth. Our God is the One Who is living today as He was living before, and Who speaks today as He spoke before, and hears today as He heard before. It is a false notion that in this age He hears but does not speak. Indeed, He both hears and speaks. All His attributes are eternal and everlasting. None of His attributes has fallen into disuse or will fall into disuse. He is the One without associate Who has no son and no consort. He is the Peerless One Who has no equal and like Whom no individual is absolutely qualified with any quality, and Whose attributes are not shared by anyone. None of His powers lacks anything. He is near and yet far and He is far and yet near. He can

manifest Himself in any shape to those who have experience of visions but He has no body and no shape. He is above all but it cannot be said that there is anyone below Him. He is on His throne, but it cannot be said that He is not on the earth. He combines in Himself all perfect qualities and is a manifestation of all true praiseworthiness. He is the fountainhead of all excellences and combines in Himself all powers. All grace originates with Him and everything returns to Him. He is the Master of all kingdoms and possesses every perfect quality. He is free from every defect and weakness. It belongs to Him alone that all those on earth and in heaven should worship Him. Nothing is beyond His power. All souls and their capacities and all particles and their capacities are His creation. Nothing manifests itself without Him. He manifests Himself through His powers and His signs and we can find Him only through Him. He manifests Himself always to the righteous and shows them His powers. That is how He is recognized and that is how the path is recognized which has His approval.

He sees without physical eyes, hears without physical ears and speaks without a physical tongue. It is His function to bring into being from nothingness. As you see in a dream, He creates a whole world without the agency of any matter and shows as present that which is mortal and nonexistent. Such are all His powers. Foolish is the one who denies His powers and blind is the one who is unaware of their depth. He does everything and can do everything except that which is inconsistent with His dignity or is opposed to His promise. He is one in His Being and His attributes and His actions and His powers. All doors that lead to Him are closed except the one door which has been opened

by the Holy Qur'ān.

[Al-Waṣīyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 309-311]

All Praise belongs to Allāh

Alḥamdu lillāh. All praise belongs to the True God Who combines in Himself all perfect attributes and Whose name is Allāh. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh is the name of that perfect Being Who is truly worthy of worship, combines in Himself all perfect attributes, is free from all defects, is One without associate and is the fountainhead of all beneficence. In His Holy Book, God Almighty has described His name Allāh as combining in itself the attributes of all other names and qualities. No other name has been given this rank. Thus, the name Allāh comprehends all other perfect attributes.

Alḥamdu lillāh, therefore, means that all types of praise, overt and covert, relating to personal perfection or relating to natural wonders, are the characteristic of Allāh, and no one is His associate in them. It also means that all true praise and perfect qualities, which the wisdom of a wise one can think of or the reflection of any thinker can conceive of, are comprehended in God Almighty. There is no excellence, the possibility of which is vouched for by reason, of which God Almighty is bereft like an unfortunate human being. The wisdom of no wise one can point to an excellence which is not to be found in God Almighty. The maximum of all excellences that a person can conceive of is found in Him. He is perfect from every point of view in His Being, His attributes and His good qualities, and He is absolutely free from all defects. This is a truth which distinguishes a true religion from a false one.

Defective Concepts of God in Other Religions

A study of all religions would reveal that there is no religion, other than Islām, which teaches that God Almighty is absolutely free from all defects and possesses to the full all praiseworthy qualities.

Concepts of Hindūs and Āryā Samājists

The average Hindū considers his deities as partners in Providence and as sharers in God's actions. He even regards them as capable of altering God's designs and of upsetting His decrees. The Hindūs also believe that their Parmeshwar, at one time or the other, by way of transmigration, was born in the shape of a human being or some animal even as filthy as swine, and that he became involved in all their ills and vices. In that condition, he was subject, like others of the species, to hunger and thirst, pain and hurt, fear and sorrow, disease and death, humiliation and disgrace, and helplessness and weakness. Thus, it is obvious that such beliefs negate the high qualities of God Almighty and reduce His eternal and everlasting glory and majesty.

Their brothers, the Āryā Samājists, who claim that they follow the Vedās strictly, deprive God Almighty of the power of creation. They hold that souls are uncreated and self-existing like God Himself, whereas reason would consider it a defect in God Almighty that He should be the Master of the world and yet should not be the Lord and Creator of something, and that the life of the world should not depend upon His support but should be self-existing. Assume that the following two questions were to be submitted to sane reason: (i) Is it more appropriate and in accord with the perfect praiseworthiness of the

All-Powerful God that He should have brought into existence the whole universe out of His Own perfect power and should be its Lord and Creator and that the whole of the universe should be dependent upon His Providence and that the attribute of creation and its power should be inherent in His being and that He should not be subject to birth or death; (ii) Or is it more in accord with His status that the whole of creation, which is under His control, should not be created by Him and should not be dependent upon Him for its existence, and that He should not be its Creator and Lord and should not possess the attribute of power of creation and He should not be free from the defects of birth and death.

Reason would never hold that He Who is Master of the world is not its Creator and that the thousands of wonderful qualities that are found in souls and bodies are self-existent, and there is no one who created them and that God Who is called the Master of all is master only in name. Nor would it hold that God is without power of creation or is helpless and defective and is given to the consumption of impure articles, or is subject to death, pain, suffering, inaction, or ignorance. On the contrary, reason bears witness that God Almighty should be free from all these low attributes and defects, and should possess full perfection. Full perfection demands the possession of full power. If God Almighty does not possess full power, is not the Creator of anything and is not able to safeguard Himself against loss or defect, He would not have full perfection and by lacking full perfection He would not be worthy of perfect praise.

The Concept of Christians

This is the case of the Hindūs and Āryās. What the Chris-

tians attribute to God Almighty by way of His Glory is a matter which can be determined by a single question. God Almighty, Who is Perfect and Eternal and Self-Sufficient and Non-Dependent, had carried on all His great works through eternity by Himself. He alone created the universe without the aid of a father or son and bestowed upon souls and bodies all the powers that they needed and is Himself the Guardian, Supporter and Controller of the universe. He brought into being, through His attribute of *Rahmāniyyat*, all that souls and bodies were to need without waiting for any action on their part, and created the sun and the moon and numberless stars and the earth and thousands of bounties contained therein out of His pure grace, without the assistance of any son. Then the same Perfect God in the latter days, discarding all His glory and power, became dependent upon a son to make provision for the salvation and forgiveness of mankind, and that son so inferior as to possess no kind of similarity to the Father. He did not create like the Father any portion of heaven or earth which should bear testimony to his godhead. The Gospel of Mark 8.12, describes his helplessness in the words that he sighed and said: ‘Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign shall be given to this generation.’

When he was put upon the cross, the Jews said that if he would come back to life they would believe in him. But he did not show them this sign, nor did he prove his godhead and perfect power in any other way. Such miracles as he worked had been worked in large numbers by previous Prophets and even the water of a pond possessed properties that manifested similar miracles (See chapter 5 of the Gospel of St. John). As he himself confessed, he was not able to show any sign in support of his godhead.

Being born of a frail woman, he, according to the Christians, underwent such disgrace, humiliation and helplessness throughout his life, as is the portion of the unfortunate and deprived ones. He was a prisoner for a period in the darkness of the womb and was born through the passage polluted by urine, and passed through every condition to which the birth of human beings is subject, and did not escape a single one of them. Then he confessed in his own book, his ignorance, lack of knowledge and powerlessness and that he was not good. That humble servant, who was without any reason described as the son of God, was inferior to some of the major Prophets in his intellectual attainments and in his actions. His teaching was also imperfect, being only a branch of the Law of Moses.

How then is it permissible to attribute to the All-Powerful God, Who is Eternal and Everlasting, this calumny that having been Perfect in His Being, and Self-Sufficient and All-Powerful, He in the end became dependent upon such a defective son and suddenly lost all His glory and His greatness? I do not believe that any wise person would permit such humiliation to be imagined concerning the Perfect Being Who comprehends all perfect qualities.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 435-441, footnote 11]

Attributes of God

It needs no argument that the true and perfect God, to believe in Whom is the duty of every creature, is the Lord of the worlds. His Providence is not confined to a particular people, age or country. He is the Sustainer of all peoples, of all ages, of all places and of all countries.

He is the fountainhead of all grace. Every physical and spiritual power is bestowed by Him, and the whole universe is sustained by Him and He is the support of all.

God's grace comprehends all peoples, all countries and all ages, lest any people should complain that God bestowed His bounties upon others, but not upon them, or that others received a Book from Him for their guidance, but they did not, or that in other ages He manifested Himself through His revelation, inspiration and miracles, but that He remained hidden in their age. By bestowing His grace upon all He obviated all these objections and out of His vast qualities He did not deprive any people or any age of His physical or spiritual bounties.

[Paighām-e-Şulāḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, p. 442]

Urdū Poem

O Allāh, Maker of things, Concealer of faults, All-Powerful;

O my Dear, my Benefactor, my Sustainer!

How should I thank You, O Bestower of Great Favours?

Where can I find the tongue to express my gratitude?

It is entirely Your grace and favour that You have chosen me;

Otherwise, there was no shortage of humble servants in Your court.

Those who vowed friendship turned into enemies;
But You did not abandon me, O Fulfiller of all my needs.

O my Unique Friend, O Refuge of my life,
You alone are sufficient for me; I can't do anything without You.

But for Your grace, I would have long been reduced to
dust;

Then Allāh knows where this dust would have
scattered.

May my heart and soul and very being be sacrificed in
Your way!

I know of none who loves like You;

Since the beginning, I have been brought up under the
blessed shadow of Your protection;

Like a suckling was I nursed by You.

In no son of man have I found the fidelity that You
have;

Nor have I come across, apart from You, any
compassionate friend.

People say that the unworthy are not accepted;

But despite being unworthy, I have been granted
acceptance in Your court.

So numerous are Your favours and bounties bestowed
upon me;

They will remain uncountable to the Day of Judgement.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, p. 127]

Two Types of Divine Attributes – Immanent and Transcendental

God Almighty, in order to bestow perfect understanding upon His humble creatures, has set out in the Holy Qur'ān two aspects of His attributes. First, He has described His attributes metaphorically as resembling some human qualities. For instance, He is Noble, Merciful, and Beneficent. He can be angry as well as loving. He has hands and eyes, legs and ears. He has been creating throughout eternity, though nothing has been eternally co-existent with Him. However, species have long ex-

isted and even that is not essential for the operation of His attribute of creation, for though creation is one of His attributes, the manifestation of His Unity and Singleness at certain times is also a part of His attributes. None of His attributes falls into permanent disuse, but a temporary cessation of its operation is permissible.

Thus God manifested His attributes of resemblance to man. For instance, God is Creator, but to some degree, man also creates or fashions; and man can be called noble for, up to a point, he possesses the quality of nobility; and man can be called merciful for, up to a point, he possesses the quality of mercy. He also has the quality of anger; and he has eyes and ears, etc. This could create a suspicion in one's mind that man resembles God in respect of these attributes, and God resembles man. Therefore, God, by contrast, has also mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān His attributes of transcendence, i.e., such attributes of which man does not partake at all in his being or in his qualities. God's creation is not like man's creation, nor is God's mercy like man's mercy, nor is His wrath like man's anger, nor is His love like man's love, nor is He in need of space like man.

The Holy Qur'ān sets out clearly that in His attributes God is quite distinct from man. For instance, it is said:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ²⁰

Nothing in essence shares its substance or attributes with God. He is All-Hearing, All-Seeing.

At another place it is said:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ لَا تَأْخُذُهُ سِنَةٌ وَلَا نَوْمٌ

²⁰ Al-Shūrā, 42:12 [Publisher]

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَشْفَعُ عِنْدَهُ إِلَّا
 بِإِذْنِهِ يَعْلَمُ مَا بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَمَا خَلْفَهُمْ وَلَا يُحِيطُونَ
 بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ عِلْمِهِ إِلَّا بِمَا شَاءَ ۚ وَسِعَ كُرْسِيُّهُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ
 وَلَا يَئُودُهُ حِفْظُهُمَا ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَلِيُّ الْعَظِيمُ²¹

This means that: True Being and True Existence and all true qualities belong only to God and that no one is an associate with Him in respect of them. He alone is alive in His Being and all others are alive through Him. He exists in His own Being and everything else exists through His support. As He is not subject to death so also He is not subject to even temporary cessation of His senses like sleep or slumber; but others are subject to death, sleep and slumber. All that you see in the heavens or in the earth belongs to Him and manifests itself and exists through Him. There is no one who can intercede with Him without His permission. He knows all that is before or behind people, that is, His knowledge comprises that which is manifest and that which is hidden. No one can encompass any part of His knowledge except that much which He permits. His power and His knowledge encompass the heavens and the earth. He supports all and nothing supports Him. He is not wearied by supporting the heavens and the earth. He is above all weakness and feebleness and lack of power.

Throne of Allāh-His Station of Singleness and Transcendence

At another place it is said:

إِنَّ رَبَّكُمُ اللَّهُ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ²²

²¹ Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

²² Al-A‘rāf, 7:55 [Publisher]

Your Lord is Allāh, Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods and then settled Himself on the Throne.

This means that having created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them and having manifested His attributes of resemblance, He then addressed Himself to His station of transcendence and aloneness, in order to demonstrate His attributes of transcendence which station is beyond of beyond and is farthest away from creation. That station which is the highest is called the Throne.

The explanation of this is that in the beginning all creation was nonexistent and God Almighty manifested Himself at a station which was beyond of beyond and is named the Throne, that is a station which is higher than and above all the worlds. There was nothing except His Being. Then He created the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. When creation came into being, He hid Himself and desired that He should be known through His creation.

It must be remembered that Divine attributes never fall into permanent disuse. Except God, no one enjoys eternal personal existence, but the permanence of species too is requisite. No Divine attribute falls into permanent disuse, but there is temporary disuse. As the attribute of creation and the attribute of destruction are inconsistent with each other, therefore, when the attribute of destruction comes into full operation, the attribute of creation falls into disuse for a period. In short, in the beginning it was the time of the operation of the Divine attribute of Singleness and we cannot say how often this period repeated itself, except that it is eternal and without limit. In any case, the attribute of Singleness has priority in time over other

attributes. That is why it is said that to begin with, God was alone and that there was no one with Him. Then God created the heavens and earth and all that is in them and in that context He manifested His attributes that He is Noble, Merciful, Forgiving, and Acceptor of repentance. But he who persists in sin and does not desist is not left without chastisement. He also manifested His attribute that He loves those who repent, and His wrath overtakes only those who do not desist from wrongdoing and disobedience.....

Nothing approximates to the Attributes of Allāh

All His attributes are appropriate to Him. They are not like human qualities. His eyes etc. are not physical and none of His attributes resembles human attributes. For instance, when a man is angry he suffers from anger himself and his heart loses its comfort and perceives a burning sensation and his brain is oppressed and he undergoes a change; but God is free from all such changes. His wrath means that He removes His support from one who does not desist from mischief and, according to His eternal law, He metes out to him such treatment as a human being metes out to another when he is angry. Metaphorically, it is called God's wrath. In the same way, His love is not like the love of a human being, for a human being suffers in love also when he is separated from his beloved. But God is not subject to suffering. His nearness also is not like the nearness of a human being, for when a human being approaches near someone he vacates the space which he had occupied before. But God, despite being near is far, and despite being far is near. In short, every Divine attribute is distinct from human qualities. There is only a verbal resemblance and no

more. That is why in the Holy Qur'ān Allāh the Exalted says:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ²³

That is: Nothing approximates to God Almighty in its being or its qualities.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 272-276]

Permanence of Allāh's Attributes

God will never cease to operate. He is always the Creator, the Providence, the Sustainer, the Gracious, the Compassionate and always will be. In my opinion, it is sinful to debate about the One of such Majesty. God has not imposed belief in anything which He has not demonstrated.

[Malfūzāt, Vol. IV, p. 347]

As the stars appear stage by stage God's attributes also appear stage by stage. Man is sometimes under the shadow of the Divine attributes of Glory and Self-Sufficiency and sometimes he is under the shadow of His attributes of Beauty. That is indicated in His saying:

كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ²⁴

It is a foolish notion that after sinful people have been condemned to hell the Divine attributes of Mercy and Compassion will cease to operate and will not be manifested, inasmuch as the permanent cessation of the operation of Divine attributes is not permissible. The basic attribute of God Almighty is Love and Mercy and that is the mother of all attributes. It is the same attribute

²³ Al-Shūrā, 42:12 [Publisher]

²⁴ 'Every day He reveals Himself in a new state.'—Al-Raḥmān, 55:30 [Publisher]

which sometimes comes into operation in the shape of the attributes of Glory and Wrath for the purpose of human reform, and when the reform has been effected then Love appears in its true form and remains in operation forever as a bounty. God is not like a short-tempered person who loves to torment. He wrongs no one, but people wrong themselves. All salvation lies in His Love and all torment is to draw away from Him.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 369-370]

General Attributes Mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān

The attributes of God, to Whom the Holy Qur'ān calls us, are set out as follows:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ⁽ⁱ⁾
 مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ أَلَمْ يَكُنْ الْقُدُّوسَ السَّلَامَ الْمُؤْمِنَ الْمُهَيْمِنَ الْعَزِيزَ
 الْجَبَّارَ الْمُتَكَبِّرَ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى
 يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ^(iv) عَلَى كُلِّ
 شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ^(v) رَبُّ الْعَالَمِينَ^(vi) هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ^(vii)
 أَجِيبْ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَا^(viii) أَلْحَبِّ الْقَيُّومَ^(ix) قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ
 اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ لَمْ يَلِدْ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ^(x)

That is, God is One and has no associate: that no one else is worthy of worship and obedience. He is so described for if He were not without associate, there would be the possibility that His associate might overcome Him and His Godhead would then be put in danger. No one else is worthy of worship means that He is so perfect and His attributes and excellences are so high and exalted that, if out of all existence, a God were to be chosen on account

²⁵ (i) Al-Hashr, 59:23 (ii) Al-Fātiḥah, 1:4 (iii) Al-Hashr, 59:24 (iv) Al-Hashr, 59:25 (v) Al-Baqarah, 2:21 (vi) Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2-4 (vii) Al-Baqarah, 2:187 (viii) Al-Baqarah, 2:256 (ix) Al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:2-5. [Publisher]

of His perfect attributes or if one's mind were to imagine the best and highest attributes, that God alone would be the most exalted and none else could be greater than Him. To associate anyone lower with Him in His worship would be utterly wrong.

Then He says that He is **عَلِيمُ الْغَيْبِ** which means that He alone has full knowledge of Himself and no one can encompass His Being.

We can wholly observe the sun, the moon and every created thing, but we are unable to observe God wholly. Then He says that He is the Knower of the seen. Nothing is hidden from Him. Being God it could not be presumed that He was unaware of anything. He observes every particle of this universe, which a human being cannot do. He knows when He will destroy this system and set up the Judgement. No one except Him knows when that will be. He alone knows all these times.

Then He says: **هُوَ الرَّحْمَنُ** which means that before the coming into being of creatures and their actions, out of His pure grace and in consequence of no action of anyone, He makes provision for the comfort of everyone; as for instance, He made the sun and the earth and all other things for our use before any action proceeded from us. This bounty is called in the Book of God *Rahmāniyyat*, and on account of this attribute, God Almighty is called *Rahmān*.

Then He says: **الرَّحِيمُ** which means that He rewards good actions with gracious rewards and does not let anyone's efforts go waste. On account of this attribute, He is called *Rahīm* and this attribute is called *Rahīmiyyat*.

Then He says: **مَلِكٌ يَوْمَ الدِّينِ** which means that He has in

His own hands the recompense of everyone.

He has no agent to whom He has committed the governance of heaven and earth, having withdrawn Himself from it, leaving it to the agent to award punishment or reward.

Then He says: **أَلَمْ يَكُنْ الْقُدُّوسُ** which means that God is the Sovereign, whose sovereignty is subject to no defect.

It is obvious that human sovereignty is not free from defects. For instance, if the subjects of a human sovereign were all to leave the country and migrate, his sovereignty could not be maintained, or if his subjects were afflicted with famine, he would not be able to recover any revenue; or if his subjects were to dispute with him and question the basis of his sovereignty, what qualification for his sovereignty could he put forward? But the sovereignty of God is not subject to any of this. In an instant, He can destroy the whole kingdom and create a new one. Were He not the Creator and All-Powerful, His sovereignty could not be maintained without injustice, for having forgiven the world once and bestowed salvation upon it, how could He have obtained another world to rule? Would He seize upon those who had attained salvation and revoke His salvation tyrannically? In such case, His Godhead would be called in question and like worldly sovereigns His sovereignty would prove defective. Those who make laws for the world fall into different moods and have recourse to tyranny when they find that they cannot achieve their selfish purpose without tyranny.

For instance, a law permits that to save a vessel, the occupants of a boat might be allowed to perish, but God should not be subject to any such dire necessity. Had

God not been All-Powerful, possessing the capacity of creating from nothing, He would have been compelled either to have recourse to tyranny or to adhere to justice and be deprived of His Godhead. The vessel of God carries on with full power and justice.

Then He says: اَلَسَّلْمُ which means that He is Himself secure against all defects and misfortunes and hardships and bestows security upon His creation. Had he been subject to misfortunes, for instance, had He been subject to being killed by people or by being frustrated in His designs, how would anyone's heart feel secure that God would save him from misfortunes? The false gods are described in the Holy Qur'ān as follows:

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا مِنْ دُوْنِ اللّٰهِ لَنْ يَخْلُقُوْا ذُبَابًا وَلَوْ اَجْتَمَعُوْا عَلَيْهِ
 اِنْ يَّسْأَلْهُمْ الذُّبَابُ شَيْئًا لَّا يَسْتَنْقِذُوْهُ مِنْهُ ضَعُفَ الطَّالِبِ
 وَالْمَطْلُوْبِ ۝ مَا قَدَرُوا اللّٰهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهٖ ؕ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيْزٌ ۝ 26

Those whom you call gods instead of Allāh, cannot create even a fly, even if they were all to join hands to do so; and if a fly were to take away something from them, they do not have the power to recover it therefrom. Ignorant are those who worship them and helpless are those whom they worship.

Can gods be like this? God has all power above every other powerful one and He overcomes all. No one can seize Him or beat Him. Those who fall into such mistakes do not rightly estimate God and do not know what He should be.

Then God is the Bestower of peace and sets forth reasons in support of His excellences and His Unity. This is an

²⁶ Al-Ḥajj, 22:74-75 [Publisher]

indication that a believer in the True God will not be put to shame in any company or before God Himself, inasmuch as he is furnished with strong arguments. But a believer in an artificial god is always in great distress. Instead of putting forward reasons he describes every senseless thing as a mystery so that he should not be laughed at and thus he seeks to hide established errors.

Then He says:

الْمُهَيْمِينَ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ²⁷

God is Guardian over all and Supreme over all. He sets everything right and is exalted above everything.

Then He says:

هُوَ اللَّهُ الْخَالِقُ الْبَارِئُ الْمُصَوِّرُ لَهُ الْأَسْمَاءُ الْحُسْنَى²⁸

He is the Creator of body and soul. He gives shape to the bodies in the womb. All beautiful names that can be conceived of belong to Him.

Then He says:

يَسْبِغْ لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ²⁹

Inmates of the heaven and the earth glorify Him alike.

This verse indicates that there is life on celestial bodies and that the dwellers therein follow Divine guidance.

Then He says:

عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ³⁰

That is, He has power to do all that He wills, which is a great reassurance for His worshippers, for if God were

²⁷ Al-Hashr, 59:24 [Publisher]

²⁸ Al-Hashr, 59:25 [Publisher]

²⁹ Al-Hashr, 59:25 [Publisher]

³⁰ Al-Baqarah, 2:21 [Publisher]

not powerful and were helpless, nothing could be expected of Him. Then He says:

رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝³¹

أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ³²

He is the Sustainer of all the worlds. He is Gracious, Merciful and Master of the Day of Judgement, and has not delegated His power to anyone else.

He hears the call of everyone who calls on Him and responds to it, that is to say, He accepts prayers.

Then He says: ³³ اَلْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ which means that He is the Ever-Living and All-Sustaining. If He were not Ever-Living there would be the fear lest He might die before us.

Then it is said that He is Single, has no father and no son and no equal and no peer³⁴.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 10, pp. 372-376]

Four Principal Attributes of Allāh

God Almighty has four principal attributes which may be called the mothers of all attributes. Every one of them makes a demand upon our humanness. These four are *Rubūbiyyat*, *Raḥmāniyyat*, *Raḥīmiyyat* and *Mālikiyyat* of the Day of Judgement.

For its manifestation, *Rubūbiyyat* demands nothingness, or a state resembling nothingness. Every form of creation, whether animate or inanimate, comes into being through it.

³¹ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2-4 [Publisher]

³² Al-Baqarah, 2:187 [Publisher]

³³ Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

³⁴ Al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:2-5 [Publisher]

For its manifestation, *Raḥmāniyyat* demands the absence of existence and its operation is related only to animates and not to inanimates.

Raḥīmiyyat demands for its manifestation an affirmation of their nothingness and non-existence from the part of creation which is endowed with reason and relates only to man.

Mālikiyyat of the Day of Judgement demands for its manifestation humble supplication and pleading and relates only to such of mankind as fall like beggars on the threshold of Unity and spread forth their mantle of sincerity in order to receive grace and, finding themselves empty handed, believe in the *Mālikiyyat* of God.

These four attributes are in operation all the time. Of these *Raḥīmiyyat* moves a person to supplication and *Mālikiyyat* consumes a person in the fire of fear and terror and gives birth to true humility, for this attribute establishes that God is the Master of recompense and that no one has the right to demand anything. Forgiveness and salvation are through grace.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulāḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, pp. 242-243]

In *Sūrah Fātiḥah* God Almighty has set forth four of His attributes, namely, *Rabb-ul-Ālamīn*, *Raḥmān*, *Raḥīm* and *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*. The order in which they are mentioned is the natural order of these four attributes and they are manifested in this order. Divine grace is manifested in the world in four types.

The first is **the most general grace**. This is the absolute grace which perpetually envelops everything from the heavens to the earth without distinction of animate or inanimate. The coming into being of everything from

non-existence and its fullest development is through this grace. Nothing is outside of it. All souls and bodies were manifested and are manifested through it and all were developed and are developed through it. This grace is the very life of the universe. Were it to be withdrawn for an instant the universe would come to an end; and had it not been for this grace, there would have been no creation. In the Holy Qur'ān this grace is named *Rubūbiyyat* and by virtue of it God is called *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*, as is said at another place:

وَهُوَ رَبُّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ³⁵

God is the *Rabb* of everything.

(Part Number: 8)

Nothing in the universe is devoid of His *Rubūbiyyat*. So the attribute of *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn* is mentioned first of all in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and it is declared:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ³⁶

as of all the attributes of grace, this has natural priority, both because it comes into manifestation before the other attributes of grace and because it is the most general in its scope, inasmuch as it comprehends everything whether animate or inanimate.

The second type of grace is **general grace** and the difference between this grace and the one previously mentioned is that the first one comprehends the whole of the universe and the second one is a special Divine bounty which is bestowed upon animates. In other words, the special attention of the Divine towards living things

³⁵ Al-An‘ām, 6:165 [Publisher]

³⁶ ‘All praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds.’—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2 [Publisher]

is called the general grace. It operates in respect of all living things according to their needs without their having any right or title to it. It is not the consequence of, or reward for, any action. It is by the blessing of this grace that every living thing lives, eats, drinks and is safeguarded against dangers and has its needs fulfilled. Through it all the means of life which are needed by every animate or its species for their own continuance, are made available. It is the consequence of this grace that whatever the souls need for their physical development has all been provided, and for those who in addition to physical development are in need of spiritual development, that is to say, they possess the capacity for such development, the Word of God has descended through eternity at the time of its need.

It is through the operation of this grace of *Rahmāniyyat* that man fulfils his millions of needs. He has available to him the surface of the earth for residence, the sun and the moon for light, air for breathing, water for drinking, all varieties of food for eating, millions of medicines for treatment, a large variety of garments for wearing and Divine Books for guidance. No one can claim that all this has been provided through the blessing of his actions, that he had performed some good action in some previous existence in consequence of which God has bestowed these numberless bounties upon mankind. It is thus established that this grace which is manifested in thousands of ways for the comfort of all animates is an *ex gratia* bounty, which is not bestowed in consequence of any action but is a manifestation of Divine compassion, so that every animate should achieve its natural purpose and all its needs may be fulfilled. By virtue of this grace, Divine bounty provides for the needs of mankind and all

animals and affords them protection so that their capacities should not remain in the realm of potentiality.

The existence of this Divine attribute is established by the observation of the law of nature. No reasonable person would deny that the sun, the moon, the earth, and the elements, and all other necessary things which are found in the universe, and upon which the life of all animates depends, are manifested through this grace. The name of this grace, of which everything that breathes takes advantage according to its needs, without distinction of man or beast, believer or non-believer, good or bad, and of which no animate is deprived, is *Raḥmāniyyat*, and by virtue of it God has been called *Raḥmān* in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* after *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*. The attribute *Al-Raḥmān* is referred to at several other places in the Holy Qur’ān. For instance:

وَرَادَّاهُمْ لَسُبِّهِمْ شَجْدُ الْوَالِدِ الْخَمِينِ قَالُوا وَمَا الرَّحْمَنُ أَنشَجِدُ
لِمَآتَا مَرْتَا وَرَادَّاهُمْ تُفُورًا ۖ تَبَرَّكَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ فِي السَّمَاءِ
بُرُوجًا وَجَعَلَ فِيهَا سِرَاجًا وَقَمَرًا مُنِيرًا ۖ وَهُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ
الْأَيْكِلَ وَالنَّهَارَ خَلْفَةً لِّمَنَ أَرَادَ أَن يَبْدُخَرَأَ أَرَادَ شُكُورًا ۖ
وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا
خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا ۖ³⁷

This means that: When the disbelievers, pagans and atheists are admonished that they should prostrate themselves before the *Raḥmān*, they feel aversion towards the name *Raḥmān* and enquire: What is *Raḥmān*? The answer is that *Raḥmān* is the Blessed Being, Who is the perpetual source of all good and Who has made mansions in the heaven and has placed the sun and the moon in those mansions which provide light to the whole creation without distinction of believer and disbeliever. The same

³⁷ Al-Furqān, 25:61-64 [Publisher]

Raḥmān has made for all mankind day and night which follow each other so that a seeker of understanding should draw benefit from this wise arrangement and should find release from the coverings of ignorance and indifference and so that he who is eager to be grateful should render thanks.

The true worshippers of *Raḥmān* are those who walk humbly upon the earth and when the ignorant ones address them harshly they reply to them in words of peace and compassion.

That is to say, they offer kindness in place of harshness, and in return for abuse, they pray for their revilers and thus they exhibit gracious qualities, for the Gracious One bestows the bounties of the sun, the moon, the earth and other countless favours upon all His creatures regardless of whether they are good or bad.

In these verses, it has been expounded that the word *Raḥmān* is used for God because His mercy encompasses all good and bad alike. At another place this mercy has been referred to in the verse:

عَذَابٍ أُولَئِكَ مِنْ أَسْأَفٍ وَكَرْهَمَتِي وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ ۝ ٣٨

I inflict My chastisement upon whom I so determine and My mercy encompasses everything.

At another place it is said:

قُلْ مَنْ يَمْلِكُكُمْ بِتَلْوِينِ السَّاعِرِ مِنَ الرَّحْمَنِ ۝ ٣٩

Tell these disbelievers and the disobedient ones that were it not for the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*, they could not have averted divine chastisement. In other words, it is by

³⁸ Al-A‘rāf, 7:157 [Publisher]

³⁹ Al-Anbiyā’, 21:43 [Publisher]

virtue of *Rahmāniyyat* that He grants respite to the disbelievers and pagans and does not seize them quickly. At another place *Rahmāniyyat* is referred to as:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَوْا إِلَى الطَّيْرِ فَوْقَهُمْ صَفًى وَيَقْفِضُنَّ مَا يَمْسِكُهُنَّ إِلَّا الرَّحْمَنُ⁴⁰

(Part Number: 29)

Do they not observe the birds flying above them with their wings spread out and closed down. It is the Gracious One Who keeps them from falling down.

This means that the grace of *Rahmāniyyat* so encompasses all animates that even birds which seem to have little value, fly joyously in the current of this grace.

As this grace follows naturally after *Rubūbiyyat*, it has been mentioned in that order in *Sūrah Fātiḥah*.

The third type of grace is **special grace**. The difference between this and general grace is that in the case of the general grace, a beneficiary is not under obligation to make himself good, or to bring his ego out of the coverings of darkness, or to put forward any effort to take advantage of it. By virtue of general grace, God Almighty bestows upon every animate all that it needs according to its nature without asking and without any effort on its part. But in the case of special grace, striving and effort, purification of the heart and supplication, attention towards God and all kinds of appropriate efforts are needed. He alone receives this grace who seeks it and this grace descends upon one who works for it. The existence of this grace is also proved by observation of the law of nature. It is obvious that those who strive in the cause of God and those who are indifferent cannot be equal. Without doubt, a special mercy descends upon

⁴⁰ Al-Mulk, 67:20 [Publisher]

people who strive truly in the cause of God and withdraw from every darkness and disorder. By virtue of this grace, in the Holy Qur'ān, God's name is *Raḥīm*. Because the attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat* is special and follows upon the fulfilment of certain conditions, it is mentioned after *Raḥmāniyyat*, for *Raḥmāniyyat* was manifested before *Raḥīmiyyat* manifested itself. On account of this natural order *Raḥīmiyyat* is mentioned after *Raḥmāniyyat* in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and Allāh the Exalted says:

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ⁴¹

This attribute is mentioned at several places in the Holy Qur'ān. For instance, at one place it is said:

كَانَ يَأْمُرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ (رَحِيمًا)⁴²

This means that God's *Raḥīmiyyat* is confined to the believers and that a disbeliever and a rebellious one have no share in it.

It is worthy of note that the operation of the attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat* has been confined to the case of believers, but *Raḥmāniyyat* is not so limited. Nowhere is it stated that God is *Raḥmān* towards believers. The mercy which is specially related to the believers is always described as *Raḥīmiyyat*. At another place it is said:

إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ⁴³

The *Raḥīmiyyat* of Allāh is close to those who do their duty to the utmost.

At another place it is said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَاجَرُوا وَجَاءُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ

⁴¹ 'The Gracious, the Merciful'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:3 [Publisher]

⁴² 'And He is Merciful to the believers'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:44 [Publisher]

⁴³ Al-A'rāf, 7:57 [Publisher]

أُولَٰئِكَ يَرْجُونَ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ، وَاللَّهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ⁴⁴

Those who believed and migrated from their homes or shed their selfish desires, and strove in the path of Allāh hope for His mercy, for Allāh is Most Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.

This means that His *Rahīmiyyat* is certainly bestowed upon those who deserve it. There is no one who seeks Him and does not find Him.

عاشق که شد که یار بجالش نظر نه کرد
اے خواجہ درد نیست وگر نه طیب هست⁴⁵

The fourth kind of grace is **the most special one**. This grace cannot be achieved merely by striving and effort. The first condition for its manifestation is that this world of means which is narrow and dark should be demolished altogether and the full power of the Lord of Unity should manifest its perfect brilliance nakedly without the intrusion of other means. This last degree of grace where all other graces end, is distinguished from other graces by being perfect in the sense that it is open and clear and there is no covertness or deficiency in respect of it. That is to say, there should be no doubt left with regard to the determined bestowal of this grace, nor with regard to the reality and pure and perfect mercy of this grace. The generosity of and the rewarding by the Eternal Master, the Bestower of the grace, should appear as bright as the day. The recipient of this grace should know with cer-

⁴⁴ Al-Baqarah, 2:219 [Publisher]

⁴⁵ What kind of a lover is he towards whom the Beloved does not incline?

O my master, what is lacking is pain, for the Physician is available.

[Publisher]

tainty and should feel it as a matter which is patent that the Master of the kingdom is bestowing a grand bounty, and great delight upon him by His determination, attention and special power. And that for **his righteous conduct** he is receiving the reward which is perfect and everlasting, most clear and superior, most desirable and loved, and that there is no aspect of a test or trial involved.

To become the beneficiary of that complete, perfect, lasting and superior grace, it is necessary that the person concerned should be transported to another world from this defective, opaque, narrow, confined, mortal and doubtful world, because this grace is an experience of grand manifestations in which the beauty of the true Benefactor should be clearly seen and should be experienced as a certainty, so that no stage of manifestation and certainty should be left out and no veil of material means should obstruct it. Every detail of complete understanding should come into operation in full force. The manifestations should be so clear and definite that God Himself should convey that they are free from every test and trial. This manifestation should carry with it high and perfect delights possessing so completely one's heart and soul and every spiritual and physical faculty to such a degree as could not possibly be exceeded.

This world which is defective in its essence, clouded in its appearance, mortal in its being, doubtful in its conditions, and narrow in its extent, cannot bear these grand manifestations. Pure lights and eternal bounties, and those perfect rays which are everlasting cannot be contained in it. For this manifestation, another world is needed which should be wholly free from the darkness of material means and should be the perfect and pure mani-

festation of the power of the One Supreme Being.

This most special grace is to some degree enjoyed in this very life by those perfect personalities who tread completely along the path of truth and, discarding their selfish designs and desires, lean wholly towards God. They die before their death, and though they appear to be in this world, they in truth dwell in the other world. Inasmuch as they withdraw their hearts altogether from the material means of this world, breaking away from the habits of humanness and turning away altogether from that which is beside Allāh, adopt the way which is above the ordinary. God Almighty treats them in the same way and, in an extraordinary manner, manifests those lights for them which in the case of the others are only manifested after death. They experience to some degree this most special grace in this life.

This is a very special grace and is the ultimate end of all graces. He who achieves it arrives at the greatest good fortune and enjoys eternal prosperity which is the fountainhead of all joys. He who is deprived of this grace is condemned forever to hell. By virtue of this grace, God Almighty has named Himself *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn* in the Holy Qur’ān. The recompense referred to in this juxtaposition is the perfect recompense, the details of which are set out in the Holy Qur’ān. That perfect recompense cannot be manifested without the manifestation of complete Mastership. This is referred to at another place where it is said:

يَمِينُ الْمَلِكِ الْيَوْمَ رَبُّهُ الْوَاحِدُ الْقَهَّارُ⁴⁶

This means that: On that day God's *Rubūbiyyat* will mani-

⁴⁶ Al-Mu'min, 40:17 [Publisher]

fest itself without the intervention of material means and it will be observed and felt that everything besides the great power and might of Allāh is nonexistent.

Then all comfort and joy, and all reward and punishment, will appear clearly as coming from God. There will be no veil in between and there will be no room left for any doubt. At that time, those who had cut themselves asunder from everything for His sake will find themselves in a state of perfect bliss which will envelope their bodies and souls, their outside and inside, and no part of their beings will be deprived of this great good fortune.

Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn also indicates that on that Day comfort or suffering and pleasure or pain, whatever is experienced by man, will proceed directly from God Almighty, and He will be the Master of all conditions. In other words, meeting with Him or being cut off from Him will be the cause of eternal good fortune or eternal misfortune. Those who had believed in Him, adhered to Unity and had dyed their hearts in His pure love, will experience the lights of His mercy clearly and openly; and those who had not achieved faith and love of God will be deprived of this delight and comfort and will be involved in painful torment.

....It will thus be seen that the priority given to the attribute *Raḥmān* over the attribute *Raḥīm* is necessary and is demanded by the rule of good composition. When the book of nature is studied, the first attribute of God which comes to notice is *Rubūbiyyat*, then His *Raḥmāniyyat*, and thereafter His *Raḥīmiyyat* and finally His *Mālikiyyat*. Perfect composition demands that the order followed in the book of nature should also be kept in view in the revealed book. To reverse the natural order in composition

is to reverse the law of nature. For a perfect composition it is necessary that the order of the composition should be in such accord with the order of nature as if it were its photograph in which that which is natural and in fact prior should be prior in description also. Thus in these verses the highest eloquence is displayed in which the natural order is perfectly observed. The verses follow the order which everyone possessing insight would observe in the order of the universe. Is this not the straightforward way that the order in which Divine bounties appear in the book of nature should be followed also in the Revealed Book? To take exception to such an excellent and wise order is the characteristic of those blind ones who have lost at once both their sight and their insight.

چشم بد اندیش که برکنده باد
عیب نماید هنرش در نظر⁴⁷

We revert to the subject and proceed to expound what is set out in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* from *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn* to *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*. As expounded in the Holy Qur’ān, it comprises four grand verities:

The first verity is that God Almighty is *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*, that is to say, that God is the *Rabb* and Master of all that which is in the universe. All that appears, is seen, felt or perceived by reason, is His creation, and that true existence belongs only to God Almighty and to nothing else. In short, the universe with all its components is created and is the creation of God. There is nothing in the components of the universe which is not the creation of God.

⁴⁷ The eye of the ill-wisher, wherever it lands;
Is prone to see evil even where there is good. [Publisher]

Through His perfect *Rubūbiyyat* God Almighty controls and rules over every particle of the universe.

His *Rubūbiyyat* is in operation all the time. It is not that after having created the world God has withdrawn from its control and that He has committed it to the law of nature so that He Himself does not intervene in any way. It is not like the maker of a machine who has no concern with it after it has been made. The creations of the True Maker are not unconnected with Him. The *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn* exercises His perfect *Rubūbiyyat* all the time over the whole universe and the rain of His *Rubūbiyyat* falls perpetually upon the whole universe. At no time is the universe deprived of the benefit of His grace. Even after the creation of the universe, that Source of Grace is needed every moment, without interruption, as if He had not yet created anything. As the world depended upon His *Rubūbiyyat* for its coming into being, it is equally dependent upon it for its continuation and sustenance. It is He Who supports the world every moment and every particle of the universe is kept fresh and flourishing because of Him. He exercises His *Rubūbiyyat* in respect of everything by His will and intent. It is not as if His *Rubūbiyyat* were exercised in respect of anything without His intent. In short, this verity means that everything in the universe is created and is dependent upon the *Rubūbiyyat* of God Almighty in respect of all its excellences and conditions, at all times. There is no spiritual or physical excellence which any created thing can acquire on its own without the determination of the Absolute Controller. Besides, it is latent in this and other verities that the divine attributes, such as *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn* etc., are special to Him and that none else is associated with Him in that respect. The opening phrase of the *Sūrah*, namely,

Alḥamdu lillāh, makes it clear that all worthiness of praise belongs to God alone.

The second verity is *Raḥmān*, which follows upon *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*. We have already explained that all animates, whether gifted with reason or not, good or bad, have been furnished and continue to be furnished with all that is needed for their maintenance, preservation of life, and the continuation of their species out of the general mercy of God Almighty. This is an absolute bounty that does not depend upon anyone's actions.

The third verity is *Raḥīm*, which follows after *Raḥmān*. This means that, as demanded by His mercy, God Almighty brings about good results in consequence of the efforts of His creatures. He forgives the sins of those who repent. He bestows upon those who ask. He opens for those who knock.

The fourth verity is *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*. This means that God Almighty is the Master of all perfect recompense which is free from all test and trial and the intervention of beguiling means and is purified of all uncleanness and is free from doubt and defect and is a manifestation of His great powers. He does not lack the power to make manifest His perfect recompense, which is as bright as the day. The manifestation of this grand verity has as its purpose to make the following matters clear to everyone as a certainty.

First, that reward and punishment are a certainty, which are imposed upon His creatures by the True Master as the result of His special determination. This matter is not possible of exposition in this world for it is not clear to the average person why and wherefore does he experience good or ill, and comfort or pain. No one hears the

voice out of whatever he experiences that this is the recompense of his deeds, nor does anyone observe or feel that whatever he is passing through is the consequence of his actions.

Secondly, the exposition is desired that material means are irrelevant and that it is the Grand Being or God Who is the fountainhead of all grace and the Master of all recompense.

Thirdly, it is desired to expound what is great good fortune and what is great misfortune. Great good fortune is that condition of supreme triumph in which light, joy, pleasure, and comfort encompass the inside and outside, the body and soul, of a person, and no limb or faculty is left out. The great misfortune is the torment which, in consequence of disobedience, impurity, distance and separation, is set ablaze in the hearts and envelopes the bodies so that the whole being feels like being on fire and in hell.

These manifestations cannot be observed in this world because this narrow, constricted and opaque world, which puts on the mantle of physical means and is in an imperfect condition, cannot bear their being made manifest. This world is subject to tests and trials and its comfort and its pain are both temporary and defective. Whatever a person experiences in this life is under the veil of physical means which hide the countenance of the Master of recompense. Thus this world cannot be the true and perfect and open day of recompense. The true, perfect and open Day of Judgement or of Recompense will be the world which will follow this one. That world will be the place of the grand manifestation and of the demonstration of glory and beauty. Whatever hardship or

ease, comfort or pain, sorrow or joy, is experienced by people in this world is not necessarily attributable to God's bounty or His wrath. For instance, anyone's being rich is not a conclusive proof that God is pleased with him, nor is anyone's poverty or privation proof that God Almighty is displeased with him. Both these are a trial so that a wealthy one may be tried in respect of his wealth and a poor one may be tried in respect of his poverty. These verities are set out in detail in the Holy Qur'ān.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 444-461, footnote 11]

It is well established that of the objects that are visible in the universe, none is indispensable. For instance, the earth is spherical and according to the estimate of some, its diameter is approximately eight thousand miles, but there is no firm reason why this shape and this bulk should be essential for it, and why is it not permissible that it should be of greater or lesser bulk or should have a different shape. From this it follows that this shape and bulk, the combination of which constitutes existence, are not essential for the earth.

In the same way, the existence and continuation of all things is dispensable. Besides, in many cases circumstances come into operation which threaten the continuation of certain things and yet they are not wiped out. For instance, despite severe famines and epidemics from the very beginning, all through the seed of everything has always survived, while reason permits, indeed it demands, that on account of thousands of hardships and calamities which have afflicted the world from the beginning, it should have happened sometime that in consequence of severe famines, corn which provides sustenance for humanity should have become non-

available, or through the severity of epidemics the human species should have disappeared, or some species of animals should have been wiped out, or the machinery of the sun or the moon might have gone out of order, or of numberless other things which are necessary for the proper working of the universe, something might have got out of order. It is contrary to expectation that millions of things should escape disorder and disruption and should not become victims of calamity.

In conclusion, such things whose existence and continuation is not essential in their own right, and whose going out of order is more of a possibility than their continuation, and their suffering no decline and their coming into being and continuing in an orderly way, and the continued availability of billions of things needed in the universe, are a clear proof that for all of them there is a Bestower of life, Protector and Sustainer, Who combines the perfect attributes in Himself. That is to say, He is the Controller, the Wise, the Gracious, the Compassionate, Eternal and Ever-Living, free from every defect, not subject to death or destruction and even free from slumber and sleep which have a resemblance to death.

He is the Being Who combines in Himself all perfect attributes, Who brought into being the universe with perfect wisdom and appropriateness and chose its existence in preference to non-existence. He alone, on account of His perfection, His creation, His *Rubūbiyyat*, and His Self-Existence, is worthy of worship.

This above is the translation of this part of the verse:

اَللّٰهُ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ لَا تَاْخُذُهٗ سِنَةٌ وَّلَا نَوْمٌ

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ⁴⁸

It should be observed with what nicety, dignity, and wisdom has the Holy Qur'ān in this verse put forth the reasoning in support of the existence of the Creator of the universe and in how few words vast meanings and wise points have been comprehended. For 'everything in the heavens and earth' has established by firm reasoning the existence of a Creator possessing perfect attributes in words whose excellence and comprehensiveness have not been equalled by anything said by a philosopher.

The philosophers of defective intelligence have not been able to appreciate that souls and bodies were created and are not eternal, and have remained unaware that true life, and true existence and true sustenance belong only to God. This deep understanding can only be learnt from the verse in which it is stated that true life and eternal existence belong only to Allāh Who combines all perfect attributes in Himself. Except Him, nothing else enjoys true existence and true sustenance. This very thing has been presented as an argument for the need of a Creator of the universe and it is affirmed:

لَهُ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ⁴⁹

That is to say: As the universe is neither really self-existing, nor self-subsisting, it does necessarily need an efficient cause through which it obtained life and continuation. It is also necessary that that such an efficient

⁴⁸ 'Allāh—there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining. Slumber seizes Him not, nor sleep. To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth.' Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

⁴⁹ 'To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

cause should comprehend all perfect attributes and should control the universe by His will. It should be Wise and should know the unseen. Verily that is Allāh.

In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh is the name of the Being Who is comprehensive of all perfect excellences. That is why in the Holy Qur'ān the name Allāh is described as comprehensive of all perfect attributes and at various places it is stated that Allāh is He Who is Lord of the worlds, is Gracious and Merciful, controls the universe by His will, is Wise, Knower of the unseen and All-Powerful, and is Eternal and Ever-Existing, etc. It is well established that in the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, Allāh is the name of the Being Who is comprehensive of all perfect attributes. That is why this verse begins with the name of Allāh and proceeds:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ⁵⁰

That is to say, the Sustainer of this transitory world is a Being Who encompasses all excellences.

This is an indication that it is a wrong notion that in this universe, which exhibits such perfect orderliness, some things can be the originating cause of others. On the contrary, for this wise project, a Creator is needed Who should exercise control by His will and should be Wise, All-Knowing, Ever-Merciful, Immortal and encompass the perfect attributes. It is Allāh alone Who possesses perfection in His Being.

After establishing the existence of the Creator of the universe, it was necessary to impress upon a seeker after truth that that Creator is free from every kind of association. This was indicated by:

⁵⁰ Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ الخ⁵¹

It should be observed how concisely in this brief statement the Being of the Creator has been shown to be free from every kind of association. Association can be of four types. It could be in respect of number, rank, descent, or action and effect. In this *Sūrah*, it has been declared that God is free from association of all these types. It has been made clear that He is the One in number and is not two or three; He is the Besought of all; He alone is Self-Existing while everything else is contingent and mortal and is ever dependent upon Him; and He is *كَمِثْلِهِ* which means that He has no son who can claim to be His partner; and He is *كَمِثْلِهِ* which means that he has no father to share His power; and He is *كَمِثْلِهِ* which means that no one can be His equal in His works to claim partnership with Him on this account. Thus, it has been made clear that God Almighty is free from associates of any of the four types and is One, without associate.

Then the Holy Qur'ān sets forth an argument in support of His being One, without associate, by stating:

لَوْ كَانَ فِيهِمَا آلِهَةٌ إِلَّا اللَّهُ لَفَسَدَتَا⁵²

مَا كَانَ مَعَهُ مِنْ إِلَهٍ الخ⁵³

That is, had there been any other god beside the One Who combines in Himself all perfect attributes, both heaven and earth would have been corrupted. Since it was inevitable that at times this plurality of gods would

⁵¹ 'Say, He is Allāh, the One; Allāh, the Independent and Besought of all....'—Al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:2-5 [Publisher]

⁵² Al-Anbiyā', 21:23 [Publisher]

⁵³ Al-Mu'minūn, 23:92 [Publisher]

have acted against one another, and their differences would have resulted plunging the universe into chaos, each one of them would have worked for the welfare of his own creation; for whose comfort, he would have considered it permissible to destroy others. This too would have led to chaos.

Then it is stated:

قُلْ ادْعُوا الَّذِينَ زَعَمْتُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ فَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ كَشْفَ الضَّرِّ عَنْكُمْ وَلَا تَخْوِيلًا. 54

This means that those who deny the existence of God are told that now that they are being pressed hard by the arguments in support of Islām and its glory and power, they should call for help on those whom they claim to be the associates of God. They will then know that they will not be able to remove any affliction from them, nor to bring about any change favourable to them.

‘Tell these pagans, O Prophet: Call those whom you worship besides Allāh, to help you against me. Do whatever you can to defeat me and give me no respite. Bear in mind that my Supporter and Helper is the God Who has revealed the Holy Qur’ān. He alone is the help and succour of His true and righteous Messengers. Those from whom you seek help are neither able to help you nor can they help themselves.

Then the Holy Qur’ān proceeds to establish through the law of nature that God is free from every defect and shortcoming:

تُسَبِّحُ لَهُ السَّمَوَاتُ السَّبْعُ وَالْأَرْضُ وَمَنْ فِيهِنَّ الخ 55

The seven heavens and the earth and those that are

⁵⁴ Banī Isrā’īl, 17:57 [Publisher]

⁵⁵ Banī Isrā’īl, 17:45 [Publisher]

therein celebrate His praise; and there is not a thing but glorifies Him with His praise, but you do not understand their glorification.

This means that reflection upon the heavens and the earth would show that God is Perfect and Holy and is without sons or associates, but that this would be realized only by those who possess understanding. It is also stated:

قَالُوا اتَّخَذَ اللَّهُ وَلَدًا سُبْحَنَهُ هُوَ الْغَنِيُّ الع 56

This means that: Some people say that God has taken unto Himself a son whereas to be dependent upon a son is a deficiency and God is free from every deficiency. He is Self-Sufficient and Independent, Who needs no one. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and the earth. Do you charge Him with something of which you have no knowledge? Why should He be dependent upon sons? He is Perfect and is alone Sufficient to carry out the obligations of Godhead and needs no other instrument.

Some people say God has daughters whereas He is free from all these deficiencies. Do you claim sons for yourselves and assign daughters to Him? This is not a fair division.⁵⁷

O People! Worship God, the One without associate, Who created you and your forebears. You should fear the Powerful and Mighty One Who has spread out the earth for you as a bed and raised the heaven for you as a canopy, and by sending water from the heaven created all types of fruits for your sustenance. So do not deliberately appoint associates for God those things which have been

⁵⁶ Yūnus, 10:69 [Publisher]

⁵⁷ Al-Najm, 53:22-23 [Publisher]

created for your benefit⁵⁸.

God is One, Who has no associate. He is God in heaven and God on earth⁵⁹.

He is the First and the Last and He is the Manifest and the Hidden⁶⁰.

Eyes are not able to probe into His reality and He knows the reality of the eyes⁶¹.

He is the Creator of everything and nothing is like unto Him. It is a clear argument in support of His being the Creator, that He has created everything according to a measure and has fixed its parameter limits⁶², which proves the existence of the Measurer and Limiter. He is proved worthy of all praise and is the only true Benefactor in this world and the next. All command belongs to Him and everything returns to Him.

God will forgive every sin for whomsoever He wills, but He will not forgive *Shirk*—associating anything with Him.⁶³

Let him who hopes to meet his Lord work righteousness and let him associate no one in the worship of his Lord⁶⁴.

Associate not anything with God. It is a great sin⁶⁵.

Do not ask any favours from anyone except God. Everything will perish except Him. His is the command and to

⁵⁸ Al-Baqarah, 2:22-23 [Publisher]

⁵⁹ Al-Zukhruf, 43:85 [Publisher]

⁶⁰ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:4 [Publisher]

⁶¹ Al-An‘ām, 6:104 [Publisher]

⁶² Al-Furqān, 25:3 [Publisher]

⁶³ Al-Nisā’, 4:49 [Publisher]

⁶⁴ Al-Kahf, 18:111 [Publisher]

⁶⁵ Luqmān, 31:14 [Publisher]

Him is your return⁶⁶.

[Brahin-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 515-521, sub-footnote 3]

God's Beauty and Beneficence

God's law of nature and the book of nature, which have been in existence since the creation of man, teach us that to establish a strong relationship with God it is necessary to have experienced His Beneficence and His Beauty. As pointed out before, by beneficence is meant instances of the moral qualities of God Almighty which a man might have personally experienced in his own being. For instance, God may have become his Guardian when he was helpless and weak and an orphan. Or God may have fulfilled his need at a time of want; or God may have helped him at a time of great sorrow; or God may have guided him without the intervention of a preceptor or guide in his search after God.

By His beauty are also meant His attributes which appear in the guise of beneficence, for instance, His perfect Power or His Tenderness or His Kindness or His *Rubūbiyyat* or His Compassion, or His general *Rubūbiyyat* and those common bounties which are available in large numbers for the comfort of man. There is also His knowledge which a person obtains through Prophets and thereby saves himself from death and ruin. Also His attribute that He hears the supplications of the restless and fatigued ones. Also His excellence that He inclines towards those who incline towards Him, even more so. All this is comprised in God's Beauty. The very same attributes when they are experienced by a person become His Beneficence with reference to him, though they are only

⁶⁶ Al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:89 [Publisher]

His Beauty with reference to others.

When a person experiences in the shape of Beneficence those Divine attributes which constitute His Beauty his faith is strengthened beyond measure and he is drawn towards God as iron is drawn towards a magnet. His love for God increases manifold and his trust in God becomes very strong. Having experienced that all his good is in God, his hopes in God are strengthened. He continues to incline towards God naturally, without pretence and affectation, and finds himself dependent upon God's help every moment and believes firmly through the contemplation of Divine attributes that he will be successful, because he has experienced in his own person many instances of God's grace, favour and generosity. Therefore, his supplications proceed from the fountain of power and certainty and his resolve becomes extremely firm and unshakable.

In the end, having observed Divine favours and bounties, the light of certainty enters with great force into him and his ego is altogether consumed. On account of the frequent contemplation of the greatness and power of God, his heart becomes the House of God. As the human soul never leaves his body while a person is alive, in the same way, the certainty that enters into him from God, the Mighty and Glorious, never leaves him. The Holy Spirit surges inside him all the time and he speaks under the instruction of this very Spirit. Verities and insights flow out of him and the tent of the Lord of Honour and Majesty is ever set in his heart. The delight of certainty, sincerity and love flows through him like water whereby every limb of his is nourished. His eyes exhibit the brightness of nourishment and his forehead reveals its

light. His countenance appears as if it had been washed by the rain of Divine love and his tongue partakes fully of this freshness. All his limbs exhibit a brightness, as after a spring shower an attractive freshness is revealed in the branches, leaves, flowers and fruits of trees.

The body of a person on whom this spirit has not descended and who has not been refreshed by it is like a corpse. This freshness and joyousness cannot be described in words and can never be acquired by the dead heart which has not been refreshed by the fountain of the light of certainty. On the contrary, it stinks. But the one who has been bestowed this light, and inside whom this fountain has burst forth, exhibits as one of his signs that all the time and in everything, in every word and in every action, he receives power from God. This is his delight and his comfort and he cannot live without it.

[Review of Religions-Urdū, Vol. I, pp. 186-187]

Perfect praise is offered for two kinds of excellences, fullness of beauty and fullness of beneficence. If anyone possesses both these excellences, one's heart becomes enamoured of him. The principal function of the Holy Qur'ān is to display both these excellences of God, so that people may be drawn towards that Being Who has no equal or like, and should worship Him with the eagerness of their souls. For this purpose, in the very first chapter, it sets out the excellences of the God to Whom it invites people. That is why this chapter opens with *Alḥamdu lillāh*, which means that all praise belongs to the Being Whose name is Allāh. In the idiom of the Qur'ān, Allāh is the name of the Being Whose excellences have reached the perfection of beauty and beneficence, and Who suffers from no deficiency. The Holy Qur'ān in-

vests the name of Allāh with all attributes and thus indicates that Allāh comprehends all perfect attributes. As He comprises every excellence, His beauty is obvious. By virtue of this beauty, He is named Light in the Holy Qur'ān as is said:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ⁶⁷

Allāh is the Light of the heavens and the earth.

This means that all light is but a reflection of His light.

Almighty Allāh's Attributes of Beneficence

Divine qualities of beneficence are many, of which four are basic. In their natural order, the **first one** is that which is described in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* as *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*. This means that the *Rubūbiyyat* of God Almighty, that is to say, the creation and carrying to perfection of the universe, is in operation all the time. The world of heaven and earth, the world of bodies and souls, the world of animals, vegetables and minerals, and all other worlds, are being nurtured by His *Rubūbiyyat*. The worlds through which a human being passes before his taking shape as a sperm till his death, or his arrival in his second life, are all nourished from the fountain of *Rubūbiyyat*. Thus Divine *Rubūbiyyat*, because it comprehends all souls, bodies, animals, vegetables, and minerals etc. is named the most general grace, inasmuch as everything that exists is its recipient and comes into being through it. Although Divine *Rubūbiyyat* is the originator of everything that exists, and nourishes and sustains it, yet its greatest beneficiary is man because **he derives benefit from the whole of creation**. Therefore, man has been reminded that his God is *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn* so that he should be en-

⁶⁷ Al-Nūr, 24:36 [Publisher]

couraged to believe that the power of God Almighty is vast and that for man's benefit He can bring into being all types of resources.

The **second excellence** of God Almighty, which is His beneficence in the next degree and which is called general grace, is *Raḥmāniyyat*, by virtue of which God is named *Raḥmān* in *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty is called *Raḥmān* because He bestowed upon every living thing, which includes man, its **appropriate shape and qualities**. That is to say, man was bestowed all faculties and powers and was given a shape and limbs which were needed by the type of life which had been designed for him and to which they were suited. Whatever was needed for his maintenance was provided. Birds, animals and man were all bestowed powers that were suited to them. Thousands of years before their coming into being, God Almighty by virtue of His attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*, created the heavenly and earthly bodies so that all living things might be safeguarded. No one's action has anything to do with the *Raḥmāniyyat* of God Almighty. It is pure mercy which came into operation before the coming into being of living things. Man is the principal beneficiary of the *Raḥmāniyyat* of God Almighty, inasmuch as everything is sacrificed for his success. Therefore, he is reminded that God is *Raḥmān*.

The **third excellence** of God Almighty, which is His beneficence in the third degree, is *Raḥīmiyyat*, by virtue of which God has been named *Raḥīm* in *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, God is called *Raḥīm* when accepting the prayers, supplications and righteous actions of people, He safeguards them against calamities, misfortunes and waste of effort. This beneficence is described

as special grace and is confined to human beings. Other things have not been bestowed the faculty of prayer and supplication and righteous action, but man has been bestowed this faculty. Man is an articulate animal and can be the recipient of Divine grace through the exercise of his faculty of speech. Other things have not been bestowed this faculty. It is obvious, therefore, that supplication is a quality of humanness, which is inherent in man's nature.

Man derives grace from the Divine attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat* as he derives from the attributes of *Rubūbiyyat* and *Raḥmāniyyat*; the only difference is that *Rubūbiyyat* and *Raḥmāniyyat* do not demand supplication as they are not confined to man and bestow their grace upon all living things, and indeed *Rubūbiyyat* comprises within itself beneficence towards animals, vegetables, minerals and heavenly and earthly bodies. Nothing is outside the operation of its grace. As a contrast, *Raḥīmiyyat* is a special robe of honour for man. If man does not derive benefit from this attribute, he reduces himself to the condition of animals, nay, even of minerals.

The operation of *Raḥīmiyyat* having been confined to man, and supplication being needed for bringing it into operation, it shows that there is a type of Divine grace which is **conditioned upon supplication** and cannot be achieved without supplication. This is the way of Allāh and is a definite law the contravention of which is not permissible. That is why all Prophets [peace be on them] supplicated for their followers. The Torah reveals that on many occasions the children of Israel offended God Almighty and were about to be chastised, but the chastisement was averted by the prayers, supplications and

prostrations of Moses [peace be on him] though time after time God announced that He would destroy Israel.

All this shows that prayer is not in vain, nor is it a type of worship which does not procure any grace. This is the thinking of those who do not estimate God Almighty as He should be estimated, and who do not reflect deeply on God's words nor do they observe the law of nature. The truth is that grace does certainly descend in response to supplication and bestows salvation upon us. It is the grace of *Raḥīmiyyat* through which man makes progress. Through this grace, man arrives at the stage of *Vilāyat*, and **believes in God Almighty as if he was beholding Him**. Intercession also depends upon the attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat*. It is *Raḥīmiyyat* of God Almighty that demands that good people should intercede for bad people.

The **fourth beneficence** of God Almighty, which might be named most special grace, is *Mālikiyyat* of the Day of Judgement, by virtue of which He has been named *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn* in *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. The difference between this attribute and *Raḥīmiyyat* is that through prayer and worship *Raḥīmiyyat* operates to establish a person's worthiness and through *Mālikiyyat* the reward is awarded. Through the operation of *Raḥīmiyyat*, a person deserves success in an affair like a student's passing an examination, but to be awarded the rank or other object for which the examination was undertaken and passed is by virtue of the attribute of *Mālikiyyat*. These two attributes indicate that the beneficence of *Raḥīmiyyat* is achieved through God's mercy and the favour of *Mālikiyyat* is achieved through the grace of Almighty God. *Mālikiyyat* would manifest itself on a vast and perfect scale in the hereafter, but in accordance with the measure of this

world, all these four attributes manifest themselves in this world as well.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulaḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, pp. 247-251]

The Will and Power of God

God Almighty operates in this world in three capacities: one, in the capacity of God; two, in the capacity of a friend; and three, in the capacity of an enemy. His treatment of His average creatures proceeds from His capacity as God and His treatment of those who love Him and whom He loves, proceeds not only in His capacity as God, but also predominantly in His capacity of a friend. The world feels that God is supporting the person concerned like a friend. His treatment of His enemies is characterized by painful chastisement and such signs as indicate clearly that God Almighty is the enemy of that people or that person. Sometimes God tests a friend of His by making the whole world his enemy and for a time subjects him to their tongues and their hands, but He does not do this because He desires to destroy His friend, or to disgrace or humiliate him. He does this so that He might show His sign to the world and so that His impertinent opponents should realize that despite their utmost efforts they were not able to harm the person concerned.

[Nuzūl-ul-Masīḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 18, pp. 517-518]

In the Holy Qur'ān, the attributes of God Almighty are mentioned in the subjective and not in the objective. For instance, He is Holy, but He has not been described as safeguarded, because then it would have to be supposed that there was someone to safeguard Him.

[Malfūzāt, Vol. IV, p. 119]

Our God has power over everything. They are false who

say that He created neither souls nor the particles of the body. They are unaware of God. We witness His new creation every day and He ever breathes a new spirit of progress into us. Had He not the power to bring into being from nothing that would have been the death of us. Wonderful is He Who is our God. Who is there like unto Him? Wonderful are His works. Who is there whose works are like His? He is **Absolute Power**.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, p. 435]

The real cause of worship of other deities and of belief in the doctrine of transmigration of souls is the denial of Divine attributes and considering God Almighty as disabled from exercising complete control over the universe. Since God's wise and just attributes were supposed to have been suspended, other deities were invented for seeking fulfilment of needs, and natural changes and upsets were described as the consequence of deeds done in a previous existence. Thus, transmigration of souls and the worship of other deities resulted from this one fundamental mistake.

[Shaḥna-e-Haqq, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 407-408]

Through His Might, does God prove His existence;
This is how He unveils His invisible countenance.

Whatever God wills and is pleased to announce;
Cannot be averted, for such is the power of God.

[Announcement dated 5 August 1885, Majmū'a Ishtihārāt, Vol. 1, p. 143]

Our God possesses many wonders, but they are visible only to those who become His out of sincerity and loyalty. He does not disclose His wonders to those who do not believe in His Power and who are not sincere and loyal to Him. How unfortunate is the man who does not know that he has a God Who has power to do all that He

wills.

[Kashfī Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, p. 21]

His powers are unlimited and His wonders are without end. For His special servants He can even change His law, but even that changing is part of His law. When a person falls at His threshold with a new spirit and carries out a change in himself, only to win His pleasure, God also makes a change for such a one so that the God Who appears to him is quite a different God from the One known to the average person. God appears weak to a person whose faith is weak, but to him who appears before God with a strong faith, He shows that for his help He too is Strong. Thus in response to changes in man there are changes in Divine attributes. For him who is without any strength in his faith as if he is dead, God also withdraws His help and support and becomes silent, as if, God forbid, He had died. But all these changes He carries out within His law and in accord with His Holiness. No one can set a limit to His law. Therefore, to assert hastily that such and such a matter is contrary to natural law without any conclusive reason, which is bright and self-evident, would be mere folly, for no one can argue on the basis of something whose limits have not yet been defined and who cannot be the subject of conclusive reasoning.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 104-105]

If God is not believed in as All-Powerful, all our hopes would be frustrated. The acceptance of our prayers is dependent upon the belief that when God wills He can create in the particles of the body or in the soul powers that they may not possess. For instance, we pray for the recovery of a person who is ill and he appears likely to

die. Then we supplicate that God may create in the particles of his body a strength that should save him from death. We observe that very often such supplication is accepted. In many cases, we are at first intimated that a certain person is about to die, and that his powers of life are at an end. But when our supplication reaches its climax and its intensity becomes poignant and painful, we seem to arrive at the point of death, then it is revealed to us by God that the powers of life have been revived in the person concerned. Then suddenly he begins to show signs of health as if he was dead and has come to life. I remember that at the time of the plague I supplicated: O Mighty and Powerful God, safeguard us against this calamity and create in our bodies an antidote which should save us from the poison of the plague. Then God Almighty created that antidote in us and said: 'I shall safeguard you against death by plague and all those who dwell within your house and are not arrogant', that is to say, those who are not disobedient to God and are righteous would all be saved. God also said that Qādiān would be safeguarded, that is to say, Qādiān would not be destroyed by the plague like many other villages.

This is what we all saw, and we observed the fulfilment of all these things.... Thus our God creates new powers and qualities in the particles of the body. Having been reassured by God the Perfect, we avoided the human precaution of inoculation against the plague. Many of those inoculated died, but we are, by the Grace of God Almighty, still alive. Thus does God Almighty create particles as He created particles in our bodies by way of antidote. He also creates souls as He breathed into me a pure soul by which I came alive. We need not only that He should create the soul and revive our body, but our

soul also needs another soul which should revive it. Both these souls are created by God. He who has not grasped this mystery is unaware of God's Powers and is heedless of God.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 390-391]

Limitless Manifestation of God's Attributes

God's Divinity and Godhead is related to His unlimited power and countless mysteries which man cannot confine within the limits of law. For the recognition of God, it is an important and fundamental principle that the Powers and Wisdom of God the Glorious are unlimited. By understanding this principle and reflecting deeply upon it everything becomes clear and one is able to see the straight path of the recognition of Truth and the worship of Truth.

We do not deny that God Almighty always operates in accordance with His eternal attributes, and it would not be improper if we were to call this acting according to eternal attributes by the name of Divine law. What we question is whether acting in accordance with those eternal attributes, or in other words, the eternal Divine law, should be regarded as limited and defined. We believe that the effects of the attributes, which are part of God's Being and are unlimited, are manifested at their appropriate times and nothing occurs outside of them and those attributes affect all creation in heaven and earth. The effects of these attributes are called the way of Allāh or the law of nature; but because God Almighty, along with His perfect attributes, is Unlimited and Endless, it would be folly on our part to claim that the effects of those attributes, that is to say, the laws of nature, do not extend beyond our experience, intelligence or observation.

It is a great mistake on the part of those who are philosophically inclined that they first regard the law of nature as something which has been completely defined and then they refuse to accept anything new which they encounter. It is obvious that this attitude is not well founded. Had this been true no way would have been left open to accept anything new and it would have become impossible to discover new things, for in such a case everything new would appear to contravene the laws of nature and one would have to reject it which would mean the rejection of a new truth. A contemplation of the lives of the philosophers would show along how many tracks their thinking has proceeded and how often they have shame-facedly discarded one view in favour of another, and having held for a long time that something was contrary to the law of nature and having denied it, they in the end accepted it remorsefully. What was the cause of this change? It was that what they had adhered to at one time was a doubtful thing which was falsified by new experience. As new experiences came to light their thinking went on changing in accordance with them. Their thinking has been guided by new experiences and yet even now there is a good deal which is hidden from their view and concerning which it is to be hoped that, after stumbling and passing through diverse humiliations they would in the end accept it.

The laws of nature are not so firm within the ambit of human reason that they should exclude new research. Can any reasonable person imagine that in the school of this world, man, despite his short age, has completed his knowledge of eternal mysteries, and that his experience of Divine wonders has become so comprehensive that whatever falls outside this experience is outside the

Power of God Almighty? It is only a shameless and foolish one who would entertain any such idea. Those philosophers who were truly good and wise and whose thinking was inspired by spiritual values have confessed that their thinking, which was limited and tentative, could not become the means of discovering and recognizing God and His limitless secrets and wisdom.

It is an established truth that everything contains within itself a quality which continues to be affected by the limitless powers of God Almighty. This shows that the qualities of things are limitless whether we come to know of them or not. If all philosophers, ancient and modern, were to employ their intellectual capacities till the Day of Judgement in discovering the qualities of a grain of poppy seed, no reasonable person would believe that they would comprehend completely all those qualities. Thus there is nothing more foolish than to think that the qualities of heavenly and earthly bodies are limited to those which have so far been discovered through astronomy or physics.

In short, the law of nature is something which cannot withstand an established truth. The law of nature means such Divine action which was manifested or might be manifested in a natural way, but God Almighty has not tired of manifesting His Powers nor has He become disabled from doing so, nor has He gone to sleep, nor has He moved away into a corner, nor has He been overpowered and has under compulsion ceased manifesting His wonders, leaving us only His actions during a few centuries. Reason, wisdom, philosophy, literature and education all demand that we should not confine the body of natural law to the few demonstrated phenomena

of which hundreds of details are still to be discovered and we should not foolishly insist that the action of God Almighty cannot go beyond what we have already observed....

I wonder how can such things as are still awaiting a complete explanation of themselves, be the absolute measures of truth or be the criteria for judging it. This complicated problem has confused the philosophers so much that some of them, namely the Sophists, have denied altogether the qualities of matter, and some of them have asserted that though the qualities of matter are admitted yet they lack permanence. Water puts out fire, but it is possible that under some heavenly or earthly effect the water of a spring might lose this quality. Fire burns wood, but it is possible that some fire, by reason of some inner or outer effect, might not exhibit this quality. Such wonders continue to happen from time to time.

Philosophers have also said that certain heavenly or earthly qualities are manifested after thousands or hundreds of thousands of years. They appear supernatural to the uninitiated. Sometimes wonders occur in the heavens or on earth which confound great philosophers. They are driven to invent some law of physics or astronomy to accommodate them so that their law of nature may not be upset. So long as no flying fish had been observed, no philosopher admitted its existence. So long as through the process of continuously cutting off the tails of some dogs, tailless dogs were not produced, no philosopher admitted this possibility. So long as it was not discovered that in consequence of a severe earthquake in some place, a fire had started which melted stones but did not burn wood, philosophers considered such a quality as

contrary to the law of nature. So long as an aspirator was not invented, which philosopher knew that transfusion of blood was part of the law of nature? Could anyone name a philosopher who admitted the possibility of machines being run with electricity before electricity was discovered?....

‘Allāmah Shāreḥ Qānūn, who was both an eminent physician and a learned philosopher, has recorded in his book that among the Greeks it was generally known that some chaste and righteous women gave birth to children without consorting with a male. He expresses his own view that all these incidents cannot be rejected as false as they could not have been invented without some factual basis.... He has recorded that although all human beings are of one species and as such they are all alike, yet some of them, in rare cases, are endowed with certain high abilities which are not matched among the rest of their contemporaries.

It has been established that in modern times there have been cases in which a person has attained the age of more than three hundred years, which is most extraordinary. Some have been endowed with memories or eyesight of so perfect a nature as is not equalled in anyone of their contemporaries. Such people are rare and appear once in a while after hundreds and thousands of years. As the common people have in mind only that which happens on a large scale and frequently they are apt to regard that as the law of nature, that which is rare is looked upon with doubt and is considered false.

The mistake philosophers make is that they fail to make research into that which is rare of occurrence and get rid of it by describing it as mere tales and stories. It is the

eternal way of Allāh that occasionally He manifests rare wonders along with that which is of common occurrence. There are many instances of this, but it would take too long to set them down. Hippocrates, in one of his books of medicine, has mentioned certain cases known to him of people who were suffering from diseases which, according to the laws of medicine and the experience of physicians, were not susceptible of treatment and who yet recovered their health. Concerning these cases, he has noted that their recovery was due to some rare heavenly or earthly effects.

We wish to add that this phenomenon of common occurrence and rare occurrence is not confined to man alone, but is to be discovered among other species also. For instance, *Āk*—swallow wort—is bitter and poisonous, but sometimes after a long period, it produces a vegetable which is very sweet and delicious. A person who has never seen it and has always associated swallow wort with extreme bitterness, is bound to regard the new vegetable we have mentioned, as a contravention of the law of nature. In the same way, among other species also, after a long time, a rare quality is manifested. A short while ago, in Muzaffargarh a he-goat was found which yielded milk like a she-goat. When this became generally known in the town, Mr. Macauliffe, the Deputy Commissioner of Muzaffargarh, sent for the he-goat deeming it contrary to the law of nature that it should be yielding milk. When the he-goat was milked in his presence it yielded about three pints of milk.... Three serious-minded, trustworthy and respectable gentlemen testified before me that they had seen some men who yielded milk like women.... Some people have observed a female silkworm laying eggs without the intervention of a male, these eggs were hatched in the normal manner. Some

people have seen a rat emerging from dry clay with half its body still as clay. A physician *Qarshī* or '*Allāmah (Shāreḥ Qānūn)* has recorded that he had seen a patient whose ear had ceased to function and he had become deaf. Later, a sore appeared below his ear in which there was a hole through which he could hear. In this way God bestowed another ear upon him....

Galen was asked: Can a man ever hear with his eyes? He answered: Present experience does not support this, but it is possible that there might be a hidden relationship between ears and eyes which as a result of an operation or through some heavenly intervention might manifest itself in this form, because the knowledge of the qualities of bodies is not yet complete.

Dr. Bernier, in his journal describing the ascent of Pīr Panjāl in Kashmīr, has mentioned a strange incident at page 80 of his book, that at one place they saw a big black scorpion which had emerged from under a rock, which was taken up by a young Moghul of his acquaintance and he passed it on to Dr. Bernier and a servant of his, but it did not bite any of them. The young Moghul stated that he had pronounced a verse of the Holy Qur'ān upon it and that in this manner he often seized scorpions which proved harmless. The author of *Futūḥāt* and *Fuṣūṣ*, who is a well-known and learned philosopher and mystic, has written in his book that on one occasion at his house there was a discussion between a philosopher and another person with regard to the burning property of fire. In the course of the discussion, the other person took hold of the philosopher's hand and thrust his own hand and the philosopher's hand into a charcoal fire which was burning in a stove and kept them there for a while. Fire

did no harm to the hand of either of them. I myself saw a dervish, who on a very hot day would recite the verse:

وَإِذَا بَطَشْتُمْ بَطَشْتُمْ جَبَّارِينَ⁶⁸

and would seize hold of a wasp and be immune to its sting. I have also experienced some wonderful effects of verses of the Holy Qur'ān, which display the wonders of the Power of God, the Glorious. In short, this museum of the world is filled with numberless wonders. Wise and noble philosophers have never taken pride in their limited knowledge and they have considered it a shameless impertinence to call their limited experience by the name of God's law of nature....

Can one set a limit to the Powers of the One Who has created this splendid heaven which is ornamented with the sun, the moon, and the stars, and has created this earth which is the envy of gardeners and which is peopled by diverse types of creatures, without the least effort, only by the exercise of His will?

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 90-101]

Creation and the Words of God

It is a mystery of *Rubūbiyyat* that creation comes into being by God's words. This may be understood as meaning that creation is the reflection of God's words or that God's words themselves, by Divine Power, take on the shape of creation. The words of the Holy Qur'ān are susceptible of both interpretations. At some places in the Holy Qur'ān that which has been created is called the words of Allāh, which, having acquired new qualities

⁶⁸ 'And when you lay hands upon any one, you lay hands as tyrants.'—Al-Shu'arā', 26:131 [Publisher]

and characteristics by Divine Power through the manifestations of *Rubūbiyyat*, took on the character of created objects. This is one of the mysteries of the attribute of creation which cannot be easily understood through reasoning. For the average person it is enough to realize that whatever God Almighty determines to create comes into being and that everything is His creation and has proceeded from His Power.

But this mystery of creation becomes plain to the men of understanding after their disciplinary exercises, through visions, and they seem to realize that all souls and bodies are words of God which, through perfect Divine wisdom, have been clothed as created objects. But the basic principle to be adhered to is the factor that is common to visions and reason, that is to say, that God is the Creator of everything and that souls and bodies could not come into being without Him. The phraseology of the Holy Qur'ān in this context is multifaceted but that which the Holy Qur'ān lays down conclusively and with certainty is that everything has come into being through God Almighty and nothing has come into being without Him, or on its own. This is enough for the elementary stage. Thereafter, to those who voyage through the different stages of understanding, the mystery would be disclosed after their striving, as Allāh the Exalted has said:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنَّا لَا يَتَذَكَّرُونَ أَنَّمَا هُم مِّمَّنْ خَلَقْنَا

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 173-175, footnote]

Here it is necessary to explain that when God, Who is the Cause of causes and to Whose Being all beings are re-

⁶⁹ 'And as for those who strive in Our path, We will surely guide them in Our ways.'—Al-'Ankabūt, 29:70 [Publisher]

lated, makes a move towards the creation of anything, then if that move is on a full scale it occasions a move in all creation, but when it is a partial move, it occasions a move in some sections of the universe. The relationship of the whole of creation and of all the worlds to God, the Lord of Honour and Glory, resembles the relationship which subsists between the soul and the body. As all the limbs of the body are subject to the designs of the soul and they all move in the direction in which the soul moves, the same relationship subsists between God Almighty and His creation.

Although I do not say like the author of *Fuṣūṣ* about the Ultimate Being that:

خلق الاشياء وهو عينها⁷⁰

yet I do say:

خلق الاشياء وهو عينها. هذا العالم كصرحٍ ممرٍّ من
قوارير و ماء الطاقت العظمى يجرى تحتها و يفعل ما
يريد يخيل في عيون قاصرة كأنها هو يحسبون الشمس
والقمر والنجوم موثرات بذاتها و لا موثر الا هو.⁷¹

The All-Wise has disclosed this mystery to me that the whole of this universe including all its sections is designed to carry out whatever is intended by the Cause of causes and is like the limbs which do not operate on their own, but are supplied with power all the time by the

⁷⁰ He created things and that He is those very things. [Publisher]

⁷¹ He created all things and He is like those very things. This universe is like a great hall paved smooth with slabs of glass. A Great Power flows underneath it and does whatever It wills. In the eyes of the short-sighted, everything appears as if it existed by itself. They imagine that the sun, the moon, and the stars exist on their own, but all existence belongs to Him. [Publisher]

Great Soul as all the faculties of the body operate under the direction of the soul. This universe is a substitute for limbs for that Great Being. There are some things in it which are as the light of His countenance, which serve as light overtly or covertly according to His will. Some are like His hands, some are like His wings and some are like His breath. In short, this universe collectively is like a body for God Almighty and all the glory and the life of this body is derived from that Great Soul, Who is its Sustainer. Whatever movement is willed by that Sustainer, the same appears in all or some of the limbs of that body as may be desired by that All-Sustaining Being.

To illustrate this, we can imagine that the Sustainer of the universe is the Great Being, Who has numberless hands and feet and numberless other limbs possessing unlimited length and breadth and like an octopus this Great Being has tentacles which spread out to all corners of the living world and draw everything to themselves. These limbs are called the universe. When the Sustainer of the universe makes a move, full or partial, it necessarily creates movement in His limbs and He manifests His designs through these limbs and not in any other way. This is an easily understood illustration of the spiritual reality that every section of creation is subject to the designs of God Almighty and discloses His hidden designs in its countenance and carries them out with the utmost degree of obedience. This obedience is not at all based on governance and coercion. Everything is drawn towards God Almighty as if by a magnetic power and every particle is naturally inclined towards Him as the different limbs of a body are inclined towards that body. Thus, it is quite true that the whole of this universe is like the limbs of that Great Being and that is why He is called Sustainer of the

universe. As the soul is the sustainer of the body, He is the Sustainer of the whole of creation. Had that not been so the whole system would have run out of order.

Everything willed by that Sustainer whether overt or covert, whether related to the faith or to the world, is manifested through the creation and none of His designs is manifested on earth except through that means. This is the eternal law of nature which is in operation since the beginning.

[Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 88-91]

It cannot be gainsaid that whatever qualities are found physically and mortally in heavenly bodies and elements are **spiritually and eternally present** in God Almighty. It has been disclosed to us that the sun and the moon etc. are nothing in their own selves. It is the **Supreme Power** which is operating behind the scenes. **It is He Who**, using the moon as a cover for His Being, bestows light upon dark nights, just as entering dark hearts He illumines them and Himself speaks inside a person. **It is He Who**, covering up His Powers with the sun, makes the day a **manifestation** of a grand light and manifests His works in different seasons. It is His Power that comes down from the sky and is **called rain** which turns the dry earth into greenery and satisfies the thirst of the thirsty. **It is His Power** that burns in the shape of fire, refreshes the breath in the shape of air, causes the flowers to bloom, raises the clouds and conveys sound to the ears. **It is His Power** that appears in the shape of the earth and carries on its back the different species like man and animals. **But are these things God?** No, they are His **creation**. God's Power moves as the hand moves the pen. We can say that the pen writes, but it is not the pen that writes, it is the hand

that writes. We can say that a piece of iron which, having been left in the fire, looks like the fire, burns and gives light, but these are not the qualities of the piece of iron, but of the fire. In the same way, it is true that all the heavenly bodies and earthly elements and every particle of the lower or the higher world which is visible and which is felt, is, on account of its different qualities, a name of God and an attribute of His. It is the Power of God which is hidden in them and manifests itself. They were all in the beginning God's words which have been manifested in different forms by His Power.

A foolish one might ask how did God's words become personified. Was not God diminished by their separation from Him? He should consider that the fire a magnifying glass obtains from the sun does not diminish the sun in any way. In the same way, the fruits by developing under the effect of moonlight do not diminish the moon in any respect. It is a secret of the understanding of God which is at the centre of all spiritual matters that the world was created by the words of God.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 423-424]

When I observe these great bodies and reflect upon their greatness and wonders and realize that all this was created by God's design and His will, my soul cries out involuntarily: Our Mighty Lord how Great are Thy Powers. How wonderful and beyond the limit of reason are Thy Works. Foolish is the one who denies Thy Powers and stupid is the one who asks: From what material did He make all this?

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, p. 425, footnote]

The reality of the Godhead of God Almighty is that He is a Being Who is the source of all grace and that all beings

owe their origin to Him. That is why He is entitled to our worship and we accept with pleasure that He is entitled to possess our bodies and hearts and souls, inasmuch as we were nothing and He brought us into being. Thus, He Who brought us into being from nothingness is rightfully our Master.

[*Shahna-e-Haqq, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, Vol. 2, pp. 428-429]

A speciality of God's Power by virtue of which He is called God is the Power whereby spiritual and physical faculties are created. For instance, in His bestowing eyes on animates, His true excellence is not that He made the eyes but that in the body cells He had already created hidden powers invested with the capacity of sight. Were those powers self-existing, God would be nothing. It would amount to giving credit to the wrong person. It is false to assert that sight is bestowed by those powers on their own and that God has nothing to do with it, and that if the particles of the universe had not had those powers, God's Godhead would have been rendered useless. The truth is that He Himself has created all the capacities of the souls and of the particles of the universe and He continues to create them and He Himself has put certain qualities in them and goes on putting them. Those very qualities when brought in juxtaposition exhibit their wonders. That is why no inventor can equal God.

An inventor of the locomotive, or of the telegraph or of photography or of the press or of any other instrument would confess that he is not the inventor of powers by the use of which he prepares the instrument. All inventors make use of existing capacities, as, in making a locomotive work, use is made of the power of steam. The difference is that God Himself has created these capaci-

ties in the elements and the inventors are not able to create those powers and capacities. Thus unless God is accepted as the inventor of all the capacities and powers of the particles of the universe and of the souls His Godhead is not established. In that case, He would rank only as a builder or a carpenter or a smith or a potter and no more. This is obvious and irrefutable.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 383-384]

We bear witness with our full faith and complete understanding that the contention of the Āryā Samājists that souls and particles with all their capacities are eternal and self-existing and uncreated is false. This idea is disruptive of the relationship between God and His creatures. It is a new and repulsive doctrine which has been put forth by Pandit Dyānand. We are not aware to what degree this doctrine is drawn from the Vedās. What we contend is that this principle which has been expounded by the Āryā Samājists is not acceptable to sane reason after full understanding and reflection and pondering.

The principle of *Sanātan Dharam* lies in exact contrast. Although it has been disfigured by the exaggerations of Vedānta and the Vedāntists, and is exposed to a number of objections, nevertheless it does have a spark of truth in it. If their doctrine is simplified it amounts only to this that everything has been created by Parmeshwar. In such case, all doubts are removed and one has to confess that according to the principles of *Sanātan Dharam* the doctrine of the Vedās also is that all souls and particles of bodies and their powers and qualities are from God.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol.19, p. 387]

The Holy Qur'ān has taught us that man together with his soul and all his capacities and every particle of his body,

is the creation of God. Therefore, according to the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān, we are the property of God and we possess no right which we can claim from Him, for not rendering which He could be held responsible. In this juxtaposition we cannot call God 'Just'. As we are entirely empty-handed we call Him *Raḥīm*. To call Him 'Just' would imply that we have rights against Him and for failure to discharge such rights He could be charged with default.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, p. 36]

The Holy Qur'ān does not arbitrarily and without reason describe God the Glorious as the Master of all souls and all cells of bodies, as do the Vedās. Almighty Allāh sets forth the reason, as He says:

لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَٱلْاَرْضِ ⁷²
خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدْ رَءٰهُ تَقْدِيرًا ⁷³

This means that the heavens and the earth and all that is in them belong to God Almighty, inasmuch as He has created them all.

He has put a limit to the capacity and work of each created being, so that limited things should point to a Limiter Who is God Almighty Himself.

Thus, we observe that as bodies are confined within their limits and cannot go outside of them, in the same way souls are also confined and cannot create more powers and capacities than those that have been invested in them. For instance, the moon completes its orbit within a month, that is, in twenty nine or thirty days, but the sun seems to complete its orbit in about three hundred sixty

⁷² Al-Ḥadīd, 57:3 [Publisher]

⁷³ Al-Furqān, 25:3 [Publisher]

four days, and it cannot reduce the size of its orbit to that of the moon. Nor has the moon the power to extend its orbit to that of the sun. If the whole world were to agree to alter the orbits of these two luminous bodies, it would not be possible for it to do so. Nor could the sun and the moon make any alteration in them of their own power.

Thus the Being Who has confined these celestial bodies to their respective orbits and Who determines their course, is God. In the same way, there is a great difference between the body of a man and the body of an elephant. If all the physicians were to combine to bring about a change in man's capacities and in his bulk so as to make him the equal of the elephant, it would not be possible for them to do so. If they desired to confine the elephant to the bulk of man, this would be equally impossible. Here also there is a limitation, as there is in the case of the sun and the moon, and that limitation indicates a Limiter, that is to say, it points to a Being Who bestowed that bulk upon the elephant and determined a different one for man.

If one were to reflect one would find a hidden control of God Almighty over all these physical matters in a wonderful way. One observes the wonderful limitations imposed by Him. Beginning with the bulk of the insects which can be observed only under a microscope, up to the bulk of the great leviathans which can swallow a large vessel like a mouthful, one observes a wonderful spectacle of limitation. No animal can transcend the limits of its body. In the same way, the stars that are observed in heaven cannot go beyond their limits. This limitation shows that behind the scenes there is One Who lays down these limits. This is the meaning of the verse:

خَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْدِيرًا⁷⁴

A similar limitation to that which governs bodies is also found in the case of souls. You can easily understand that the excellences which a human soul can exhibit, or towards which it can make progress, are not available to the soul of an elephant despite its size and bulk. In the same way, the soul of every animal is confined to the limits of its species with reference to its faculties and capacities and it can acquire only those excellences which are appointed for its species. Thus as the limitations of bodies indicate that they have a Limiter and Creator, in the same way, the limitations of the capacities of souls also indicate that they have a Creator and a Limiter.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 17-19]

Creation and Differences in Rank

It would be an intrusion into the works of God, which is not permissible, to enquire why did God create a difference between capacities and why was not everyone bestowed such capacities as would enable him to arrive at the stage of perfect understanding and perfect love. Every reasonable person can understand that no one has a right against God to enquire that everyone should have the same rank and should be endowed with excellent faculties.

It is a matter of His grace to bestow whatever He wills. For instance, God has made you man and has not made a donkey a man. You have been endowed with reason and a donkey has not been so endowed. You can acquire

⁷⁴ '[He] has created everything, and has ordained for its proper measure.'—Al-Furqān, 25:3 [Publisher]

knowledge and a donkey cannot. It is the will of the Master and is not a matter of right which you have and a donkey has not. In the creation of God a clear differentiation of ranks is discernible which no reasonable person can deny. Then can any part of creation which has no right to exist, let alone a right to be awarded a high rank, raise any objection before the Authoritative Master? It is a bounty and beneficence of God Almighty to bestow the robe of being upon His creatures and it is obvious that a Donor and Benefactor has the authority to regulate His bounty and His beneficence. Had He not the authority to bestow less He would not have the authority to bestow more and in such case He would not be able to exercise His Mastership.

If the creation were vested with any right against the Creator, this would involve a continuous series of claims; for at whatever stage the Creator would place any created being, the latter could claim that he is entitled to a higher rank. If God Almighty can create limitless ranks, and the exaltation of creation does not come to an end by the creation of man, the series of claims on the basis of right would be endless.

If the search should be for the wisdom underlying this differentiation of ranks, it should be understood that the Holy Qur'ān has set forth three types of wisdom in that context which are obvious and clear and cannot be denied by any reasonable person.

The first one is, that the affairs of the world may be adjusted in the best manner as is said:

وَمَا لَكُمْ لَوْلَا هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ عَلَى كُلِّ مَنٍّ الْقَرِيبِينَ عَظِيمٍ ۝ أَهُمْ يَفْقَهُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ
نَعْنُ قَسَمًا بَيْنَهُمْ مَوَاسِيَتُهُمْ فِي الْعَبَاةِ الدُّنْيَا ۚ وَرَفَعْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ فَوْقَ بَعْضٍ دَرَجَاتٍ

لِيَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُهُمْ بَعْضًا سُلَاطَةً تُخَرِّجُهُمْ غَيْرَ مَا خُذُوا خَيْرَ مَا رَزَقْتُمْ رَبِّكَ حَٰزِلُونَ ۚ وَمَا يَجْمَعُونَ 75

(Part Number: 25)

This means that: The disbelievers say why was this Qur'ān not revealed to some chieftain or wealthy personage of Mecca or Ṭā'if so that it should have suited his eminence and by virtue of his dignity and his statesmanship and his spending his money, the faith could have spread speedily? Why was a person selected for this honour, who is poor and has no property?

To these the retort is:

أَهُمْ يَقْسِمُونَ رَحْمَتَ رَبِّكَ 76

Is it for them to distribute the mercies of the Eternal Lord?

That is to say, it is the doing of the All-Wise that He limited the faculties and capacities of some as they became involved in the appendages of this world and took pride in being called chieftains and wealthy and rich and forgot the true object of existence. On others, He bestowed spiritual graces and holy excellences and they became the favourites of the True Beloved through their devotion to His love.

Then follows the explanation that:

نَحْنُ قَسَمْنَا بَيْنَهُمْ مَوَٰزِينَاهُمْ 77

God has made some rich and some poor, some with fine qualities and others dull, some inclined to one occupation and others to another, so as to make it easy for some to serve others and to cooperate with them in order that responsibility might be shared and human affairs might

⁷⁵ Al-Zukhruf, 43:32-33 [Publisher]

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

be carried on with ease. The verse concludes that in this context God's Book is far more beneficial than worldly riches and properties. This is a subtle allusion to the need for revelation.

Man is a social animal and none of his affairs can be carried to completion without cooperation. For instance, take bread which is the staff of life. How much social cooperation is needed for its production? From the stage of cultivation of the earth to the stage when a loaf of bread becomes available for eating, scores of workers have to cooperate with each other. This shows how much cooperation and mutual help is needed in different sectors of social affairs. To fill this need the All-Wise One created man equipped with different degrees of faculties and capacities so that everyone should occupy himself pleasurably according to his capacity and inclination; some should engage in cultivation, some should manufacture agricultural implements, some should grind corn, some should bring water, some should bake bread, some should spin, some should weave, some should engage in trade, some should carry on commerce, some should undertake employment and thus everyone should cooperate and help each other. Cooperation involves dealing with each other and these dealings give rise to questions of treatment, compensation, and neglect of duty which demand a system of law which should restrain wrong, trespass, rancour, disorder, and neglect of God, so that the order of the universe should not be upset.

The making of a living and the due performance of social duties depend upon justice and the recognition of God and these demand a system of law which should provide for due administration of justice and proper understand-

ing of the Divine and which should exclude every type of wrong and every kind of mistake. Such a system of law can be promulgated only by the Being Who is altogether free from forgetfulness, mistake, wrong and trespass and Who is worthy of obedience and respect in His Being. The law may be good, but if the promulgator of the law is not such who by his rank should possess superiority over all and the right to rule over them and if he is in the eyes of the people not free from tyranny, vice, error, and mistake, the law will either not come into operation or if it does come into operation, would give rise to every kind of disorder and instead of doing any good it would result in harm. All this would predicate a Divine Book, for all good qualities and every kind of excellence is to be found only in the Book of God.

Secondly, the wisdom underlying a difference of ranks is, that the excellence of good people may be demonstrated, for every good quality is known only by contrast. As it is said:

إِنَّا جَعَلْنَا مَا عَلَى الْأَرْضِ زِينَةً لَّهَا لِنَبْلُوَهُمْ أَهُمْ أَحْسَنُ عَمَلًا⁷⁸

(Part Number: 15)

That is to say: God has made everything upon earth a source of ornament for it so that the righteousness of the righteous may be demonstrated in comparison with the wicked, and so that by the observation of that which is dull the fineness of that which is fine may become apparent. Opposites are known by comparison with opposites and the value of the good is known by comparison with the bad.

Thirdly, in differentiation of ranks, it is desired to demonstrate different types of power and to draw attention to

⁷⁸ Al-Kahf, 18:8 [Publisher]

God's greatness as is said:

مَا لَكُمْ لَا تَرْجُونَ لِلَّهِ وَقَارًا ۚ وَقَدْ خَلَقَكُمْ أَطْوَارًا ۚ⁷⁹

(Part Number: 29)

This means that: What ails you that you do not admit the greatness of Allāh? Whereas the differentiation of capacities and temperaments was created by the All-Wise so that His Greatness and Power might be recognized.

As is said at another place:

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِنْ مَاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنِهِ
وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَمْشِي عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ
يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ⁸⁰

(Part Number: 18)

This means that:

Allāh has created every animal from water. Some of them move on their bellies, some of them on two feet and some on four. Allāh creates what He pleases. Allāh has power to do all that He wills.

This is an indication that all these different species have been created so that the diverse powers of the Divine might be demonstrated. Thus, the differentiation in the temperaments and the nature of creation is due to these three considerations which God has set out in the verses cited above.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 203-207, footnote 11]

Refutation of the Misguided Notions of the Āryās

Pandit Dyānand has recorded at page 501 of his Urdū book *Satyārath Prakāsh* that Permeshwar cannot forgive anyone's sin, for if He were to do so He would be guilty

⁷⁹ Nūḥ, 71:14-15 [Publisher]

⁸⁰ Al-Nūr, 24:46 [Publisher]

of injustice. Thereby he confesses that Permeshwar is merely a judge and is not Master. On the same page he has recorded that Permeshwar cannot bestow unlimited reward for limited actions. But if He is Master, there is no harm in His rewarding limited service with unlimited reward. The Master's actions are not to be measured by justice. If we own something and out of it we bestow a portion upon someone who asks for it, no one else has the right to complain that more was given to another than to him. In the same way, a creature has no right against God Almighty to demand justice. A servant cannot ask for justice nor can God admit the right of any of His creation to demand justice. Whatever God bestows upon a creature as a reward for his actions is purely His bounty.

Actions are nothing in themselves, for no action can be performed without the support and grace of God. When we reflect upon God's law, it becomes clear that whatever God Almighty has provided for His creatures is a bounty of two types.

One is the bounty which existed before the coming into being of man and man's action has nothing to do with it. He has created for the benefit of man the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, water, air, fire, etc. and there is no doubt that all these things were prior to the actions of man, and man himself came into being after them. This is the Divine mercy which, in the idiom of the Qur'ān, is called *Rahmāniyyat*. That is to say, such bounty is not bestowed as a reward of a person's actions, but is by way of pure grace.

The second type of mercy is called *Rahīmiyyat* in the idiom of the Qur'ān; that is to say, the bounty that is bestowed upon man as a reward of his righteous actions.

Can we imagine that the God Who has demonstrated as an instance of His generous *Mālikiyyat* that He made the earth and heavens and the moon and sun, etc. when there was no trace of His creatures and their actions, is indebted to His creatures and rewards them according to their right, but no more? Had His creatures any right that He should have made the earth and heavens for them and should have created thousands of illuminated bodies in the heavens and thousands of things upon the earth which are a source of comfort and ease? To describe that Absolute Donor as a mere dispenser of justice like a judge and to deny His status and dignity as Master is the height of ingratitude.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 26-28]

It should be borne in mind that Master is the word which does not admit of any rights, and this expression can be applied in its fullness only to God for He alone is the Perfect Master. A person who accepts another as the Master of his life etc. confesses that he has no right to his life and property and that he owns nothing and everything belongs to the Master. In such a case, it is not permissible for him to demand from his Master that justice should be done to him in such and such a matter because justice depends upon right and he has given up all his rights. In the same way, man who in juxtaposition to his True Master accepted his own status as that of servant and confessed:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ⁸¹

That is to say: Our belonging, life, body and progeny are all the property of God.

⁸¹ Al-Baqarah, 2:157 [Publisher]

After this confession there remains no right which he can demand from God. That is why those who are gifted with true understanding, despite every type of endeavour, worship and almsgiving, leave themselves to the mercy of God Almighty and attach no value to their actions and make no claim that they have any right. In truth, Virtuous is only He through Whose bestowed strength a person can accomplish anything good, and He is God. No person can demand justice from God Almighty on account of his personal ability or merit. According to the Holy Qur'ān, all God's doings are as Master. As He punishes sin so He also forgives sin. He has power to do both as befits His *Mālikīyyat*. If He were always to punish sin there would be no escape for man, but God forgives most sins and punishes some so that a heedless person being warned should attend to Him. As is said in the Holy Qur'ān:

مَا أَصَابَكُمْ مِنْ مُصِيبَةٍ فِيمَا كَسَبْتُمْ أَيْدِيَكُمْ وَيَعْفُوا عَنْ كَثِيرٍ⁸²

Whatever misfortune befalls you is in consequence of that which you practise. He pardons many of your sins, and punishes some.

And in the same *Sūrah* is the verse:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُوا عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ⁸³

He it is Who accepts repentance from His servants and forgives sins.

No one should be misled by the fact that the Holy Qur'ān also contains the verse:

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ مِثْقَالَ ذَرَّةٍ شَرًّا يَرَهُ⁸⁴

⁸² Al-Shūrā, 42:31 [Publisher]

⁸³ Al-Shūrā, 42:26 [Publisher]

⁸⁴ Al-Zilzāl, 99:9 [Publisher]

Whoso will have done the smallest particle of ill will also see it.

Here there is no contradiction for the ill that is mentioned here is the ill in which a person persists and from which he does not repent. The Holy Qur'ān repeatedly affirms that remorse and repentance, and non-insistence upon evil, and asking for forgiveness procure forgiveness of sins. Indeed, it is said that God loves those who repent, as in the verse:

رَبُّ اللَّهِ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ⁸⁵

That is: God Almighty loves those who repent and loves those who strive to purify themselves from sin.

In short, to punish every sin is contrary to the forgiveness and mercy of God Almighty, for He is Master and is not like a magistrate. He has named Himself Master in the very first *Sūrah* of the Holy Qur'ān where it is said: He is *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*, that is to say, He is the Master of punishment and reward and it is obvious that no one can be called Master unless He has authority to do both, that is to say, to punish when He wills and to forgive when He wills.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 23-24]

According to the principle of the Āryās, their Permeshwar cannot be called *Mālik* for he has not the power to bestow what he has as a pure bounty or gift, while the donee has no right to it. He who is the owner of property has the authority to bestow any portion of it on anyone he chooses, but the Āryās believe that Permeshwar can neither forgive sins nor can He bestow anything on anyone as a gift or bounty, because if He does either He would

⁸⁵ Al-Baqarah, 2:223 [Publisher]

be acting unjustly.

Those who believe in the transmigration of souls cannot affirm that Permeshwar is the Master of creation. We have repeatedly affirmed that it is quite improper to bind a Master to act according to the principles of justice. We can affirm that He Who is *Mālik* is *Raḥīm* and Bestower and Generous and forgives sins, but we cannot say that He adheres to justice in respect of His slaves and horses and cattle, inasmuch as the notion of justice is only applicable where there is a certain freedom on both sides. For instance, we can say concerning worldly sovereigns that they are just and treat their subjects with justice. So long as their subjects obey them, the rule of justice makes it obligatory upon them that, in return for the obedience of their subjects and the payment of their dues, the sovereign should safeguard their lives and properties and in times of need should help them out of his wealth. Thus, from one aspect sovereigns impose their commands upon their subjects and from another aspect the subjects impose their wishes upon the sovereigns. So long as these aspects operate in cooperation, the country remains at peace, but when either side commits a default the country ceases to be at peace. This shows that we cannot describe a sovereign as a true *Mālik* for he has to behave justly towards his subjects and his subjects have to behave justly towards him.

As regards God Almighty, we can call Him *Raḥīm* on account of His *Mālikiyyat*, but we cannot call Him just. Any person who is owned by another cannot demand justice from his owner, though he can humbly supplicate for mercy. That is why the Holy Qur'ān does not designate God Almighty as just, because justice demands

mutual equality. God Almighty is Just in the sense that He acts justly as between creatures regarding their mutual rights, but He is not just in the sense that any creature of His might demand his right from Him as an associate. All His creatures belong to God and He has authority to treat them as He might wish. He might bestow kingdom upon whom He wills and He might make a beggar of him whom He so wills. He might cause anyone to die young or He might bestow a long life upon any. We ourselves when we own anything are free to bestow it as we might choose. Indeed God is Merciful; rather, He is the Most Merciful of all. By virtue of His mercy, and not out of any limits in consideration of justice, He provides for His creation. As we have repeatedly affirmed, the quality of *Mālikiyyat* and the quality of justice are inconsistent with each other. Having been created by Him, we have no right to demand justice from Him. We supplicate Him humbly for mercy.

It is most unbecoming for a creature to demand justice from God Almighty in His treatment of him. As everything relating to the nature of man is from God and all of man's faculties, spiritual as well as physical, are His bounty and a good action can be performed only through the support and strength bestowed by Him, it would be the height of ignorance to demand justice from Him relying upon one's good actions. We cannot consider such a teaching to be based on true knowledge. Indeed such a teaching is deprived of all true understanding and is full of folly. God Almighty has taught us in the Holy Qur'ān that to call God Just vis-à-vis His creatures is not only a sin, but a rank blasphemy.

Refutation of the Misguided notions of Christians

Short-sighted Christians, through lack of proper reflection, are involved in the false notion that justice and mercy cannot coexist in God Almighty, inasmuch as justice demands punishment and mercy demands forbearance. They fail to consider that the **justice of God Almighty is also a mercy** for it is all for the benefit of mankind. For instance, if God Almighty adjudges that a murderer should be executed this does not add anything to His Godhead. He ordains this so that mankind should not become extinct through killing each other. This is mercy for mankind and God Almighty has established this system of mutual rights between His creatures so that peace might be maintained and no group should trespass against another and thus create disorder. Thus all the punishments prescribed in the sphere of life, property, and honour are a mercy for mankind....

There is no conflict between justice and mercy. They are like two streams that run parallel to each other in their courses without one interfering with the other. We find the same principle in operation in worldly sovereignties. An offender is punished, but those who behave well and please the government become recipients of bounties and gifts.

It should be borne in mind that the basic attribute of God is mercy, and the notion of justice comes into operation after reason and law are established. That also is in a way a mercy. When reason is bestowed upon a person and, through his reason, he becomes aware of the limits set by God Almighty and His laws, he becomes subject to the operation of justice, but reason and law are not a condi-

tion for the operation of mercy. As God Almighty out of His mercy desired to exalt man above the rest of His creation, He prescribed the limits and rules of justice between them. It is a folly to imagine a contradiction between justice and mercy.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 73-74]

Knowledge of God

A subtle question rises here: what is the nature of the knowledge of Almighty God through the perfection of which He is aware of the overt and the covert of every particle? It is true that reason cannot comprehend the true condition of that knowledge, yet it is entirely true to say that of all types of knowledge that can be conceived of that knowledge is more powerful and stronger and fuller and more complete. When we observe our own ways of acquiring knowledge and consider its diverse types, we find that the greatest and most certain and most absolute of all the types of knowledge is the knowledge that we possess concerning our own existence.

No man can in any condition forget his own existence or entertain any doubt concerning it. So far as our reason extends, we find this type of knowledge more powerful and stronger and fuller and more complete. We find it inconsistent with the perfection of God Almighty that His knowledge with regard to His creatures should in any way be less perfect than this, inasmuch as it would amount to a deficiency on the part of God Almighty, that He should not possess the highest kind of knowledge once could conceive of and it could be objected why God's knowledge fell short of the highest kind; was it by His own design or by some compulsion? It could not be

by His own design for no one deliberately permits a deficiency with regard to himself. Then how should God Almighty, Who loves perfection, permit such a deficiency concerning Himself? If it is said that it is by some compulsion, then it would follow that the compeller would be supreme over God Almighty in his powers and his strength, so that on account of that excess of strength he should be able to restrain God in His designs. But that is impossible in itself because nobody is supreme over God Almighty through whose obstruction He could be confronted with some compulsion. It is established, therefore, that God's knowledge is perfect.

We have already established that of all types of knowledge the most perfect is that which a person has with regard to his own existence. We have therefore to acknowledge that God's knowledge concerning His creation is like that knowledge though we cannot comprehend its true nature. Our reason tells us that the most certain and absolute knowledge is that which should exclude any distance or barrier between the knower and that which is to be known. That knowledge is of this type. As a man is not dependent upon other sources of knowledge in order to be aware of his own existence, to be animate and to consider oneself as an animate are so close to each other as to be identical. Such should be the knowledge of God Almighty concerning the whole universe. Here also there should be no difference and distance between the Knower and that which is to be known. This high quality of knowledge which God needs for the establishment of His Godhead can be predicated of Him, when it is accepted concerning Him that there is so much closeness and such relationship between Him and the subject of His knowledge, greater than which it is

not possible to imagine.

This perfect relationship with the subjects of His knowledge can exist only when all of them should have proceeded from Him and should be His creation. Their being must be dependent upon His Being. In other words, when the situation should be such that the true existence should be only His and all others should have proceeded from Him and should subsist with His support. Even after their creation, they should not be independent of Him, nor be separate from Him, but in truth after the creation of all things, He alone should be truly alive and all other life should have proceeded from Him and should exist only with His support. He alone should be subject to no limitation and everything else, souls as well as bodies, should be confined within the limits set by Him. He should comprehend everything; everything should be comprehended in His *Rubūbiyyat*. There should be nothing which should not have proceeded from His hand and should not be included within His *Rubūbiyyat*, nor should it exist without His support. It is only in such a situation that God Almighty would have a perfect relationship with the subjects of His knowledge. This relationship is referred in the Holy Qur'ān as:

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ ⁸⁶

We are closer to him than his jugular vein.

Similarly at another place it is said:

هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ ⁸⁷

That is to say: He alone sustains true life and everything else has proceeded from Him and has a life because of

⁸⁶ Qāf, 50:17 [Publisher]

⁸⁷ Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

Him;

In truth He is the Life of all lives and is the Power of all powers....

If the soul is not accepted as having been created, then there would be no reason to assume that someone who bears the fictitious title of Permeshwar would have any knowledge concerning the reality of the soul, whose knowledge would extend to the ultimate limits of the soul. A person who has full knowledge concerning a thing has the power to make it also, and if he has not the power then his knowledge must be defective in some respect. In the absence of full knowledge, it would be difficult to distinguish between similar things, let alone to have the power of making them. If God Almighty is not the Creator of things then He not only suffers from the deficiency that His knowledge is incomplete, but it also follows that He would be subject to confusion in distinguishing between millions of souls and might often mistake the soul of X as the soul of Y. Partial knowledge often leads to such confusion. And if you assert that it does not, then produce some argument in your favour.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 221-226 footnote]

It might be asked that if full comprehension of a thing implies the power to create it then, as God's knowledge of His Own Being is perfect, is He the Creator of His Own Being or has He power to create the like of Himself? The answer to the first part is that were God Almighty the Creator of His Own Being, it would involve His being in existence before His coming into existence and this is an impossibility. God Almighty possessing complete knowledge of His Own Being means that, in this instance, the Knower and His knowledge and

that which is known are all the same and cannot be separated. There is here nothing which should be regarded as having been created. God's knowledge of His Own Being cannot be compared to anything else. In this instance, the Knower is not something apart from that which is known so that one may be designated as the Creator and the other as creation. The proper way to put it is that His Being is uncreated and is eternally and everlastingly Self-Existing and that is the meaning of God.

The second part of the objection is that God's complete knowledge of Himself means that He has the power to create His Own like. The answer to this is that God's power directs itself towards matters which are not inconsistent with His eternal attributes. It is true that God, if He so desires, can create that of which He has perfect knowledge, but it certainly does not follow that whatever He has the power to do He should proceed to do without regard to His perfect attributes. In the exercise of all His powers, He has regard to His perfect attributes and He has it in mind whether that which He wills is not contradictory of His perfect attributes. For instance, He has the power to burn a pious and righteous person in the fire of Hell, but His mercy and justice and attribute of reward would stand in the way, and, therefore, He never does it. In the same way His power is never inclined to destroy Himself for this would be contrary to His eternal life. He does not create His Own like because His attributes of Unity and Peerlessness, which are eternal, prevent Him from thinking in that way. It should be understood that to be unable to do something is one thing, but despite the power to do a thing, not to address Himself to something contradictory of His attributes, is quite another.

It is characteristic of God Almighty alone to know the hidden by virtue of His personal power and His personal condition. From ancient times, those who based themselves upon truth have believed that it is proper for God Almighty that He should know the hidden. This is a personal speciality of His. He has no associate in this attribute as He has no associate in His other attributes. It is, therefore, impossible for anyone to have personal knowledge of the hidden whether he is a Prophet or *Muḥaddath* or *Walī*. It is true, however, that favourites and chosen ones are given knowledge of hidden mysteries through revelation. This has been so since ancient times and continues today, but such experience is now confined to the followers of the Holy Prophet alone. [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[*Taṣḍīq-un-Nabī*, pp. 26-27 or *Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmadiyya*, Vol. 3, p.57]

Our Ever-Living and All-Sustaining God talks to me like one person talks to another. I ask Him something and supplicate Him and He answers in words full of power. If this should happen a thousand times, He does not fail to answer. In His words He discloses wonderful hidden matters and displays scenes of extraordinary powers till He makes it clear that He alone is the One who should be called God. He accepts prayers and intimates their acceptance. He resolves great difficulties and through repeated supplications revives those who are sick and very nearly dead. He discloses all these designs of His in advance through His words which relate to future events. He proves that He is the God of heaven and earth. He addressed me and told me that He would safeguard me against death by plague and all those who dwell in my house in piety and righteousness. Who else is there in this age except myself who has published such a revela-

tion and disclosed God's promise concerning the members of his family and other pious people who dwell within his house?

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 448-449]

In addition to all other normal conditions of man, ingrained in his nature, is the quest for a Transcendental Being for Whom there is a longing in his heart of hearts. The effect of this quest begins to be felt as soon as a child is born. As soon as it is born, it exhibits a spiritual characteristic which is that it leans towards its mother and entertains a natural affection for her. As its senses develop and the flower of its nature blooms, this attraction of love, which is inherent in it, begins to exhibit itself patently. It finds no comfort anywhere except in the lap of its mother. If it is separated from its mother and is put at a distance from her, its life becomes bitter, and though a heap of bounties may be placed before it, it finds its true comfort only in its mother's lap and nowhere else. Then what is this attraction that it feels towards its mother?

In truth, it is the **same attraction** which is vested in a child's nature for **God**. Every exhibition of affection by a person in fact proceeds from that very attraction, and the **restlessness of a lover** which a person experiences is in truth a reflection of that very love, as if he takes up diverse things and examines them in search for something that he has lost and whose name he has forgotten. A person's love of property, or children, or wife, or his soul being drawn towards the song of a sweet voiced singer, are in fact all **in search of the lost Beloved**. As man cannot perceive with his physical eyes the Imperceptible Being Who is latent in everyone like fire and yet is hidden from

everyone, nor can he find Him through the exercise of his imperfect reason, he has been subject to many errors in his understanding of Him and through his errors he renders to others that which is His due. God Almighty has mentioned an excellent illustration in the Holy Qur'ān that the world is like a great hall paved smooth with slabs of glass and a current of water flows underneath them which runs very fast. A person looking at the slabs of glass wrongly imagines them to be water also and is afraid of walking upon them as he would be afraid of walking upon water, though in reality they are only glass but very clear and transparent. Thus, these great objects in heaven like the sun and the moon etc. are transparent like glass and are worshipped by mistake. Behind them, there is a Higher Power at work which is flowing swiftly like water. It is the mistake of those who worship created things that they attribute to the glass all this activity which is being manifested by the Power behind it. This is the explanation of the verse:

رَأَيْتُمْ صَرَاحُ مُمَرَّدٌ مِّنْ قَوَارِيرَ⁸⁸

Revelation Needed for Attaining Absolute Certainty

As the Being of God Almighty, despite its brightness, is hidden beyond sight, the physical universe is not adequate for its true recognition. This is the reason why those who depended upon the physical system despite their careful consideration of its perfect orderliness which comprehends hundreds of wonders within itself, and despite their pursuit of astronomy and physics and philosophy to a degree which shows that they had pene-

⁸⁸ 'It is a palace paved smooth with slabs of glass.'—Al-Naml, 27:45
[Publisher]

trated through heaven and earth, could not get rid of their doubts and suspicions and became involved in all types of errors and wandered far afield in their absurd fantasies. If they thought of the Being of the Creator, they proceeded only thus far that observing the great orderliness of the wise system they imagined that it should have a Creator. It is obvious, however, that this idea is incomplete and this understanding is imperfect, for to say that this system needs a God is not equal to saying that God in fact exists. This was only their conjectural understanding which cannot bestow satisfaction and contentment upon the heart, nor can it entirely remove doubts. This is not a cup which could quench the thirst of complete understanding which is inherent in man's nature. In fact, such imperfect understanding is very dangerous, for after a great deal of noise it leads to nothing.

So long as God Almighty does not affirm His Existence by His word, as indeed He has done, the mere observation of His handiwork does not afford satisfaction. For instance, if we see a room which is bolted from inside, our first reaction would be that there is someone inside who has put up the bolts for it is impossible to put up the bolts from outside. But if over a long period no one from inside should respond to repeated calls, we would have to abandon our assumption that there is someone inside and we would imagine that there is no one inside and that the bolts have been put up through some clever device. This is the case of the philosophers whose understanding does not go beyond the observation of God's work. It is a great mistake to imagine that God is like a corpse which has to be brought out of its grave by man. If God has to be discovered through human effort, all our hopes of such a God are vain.

Indeed God is the Being Who has ever called mankind to Himself by announcing: **I am present**. It would be impertinence to imagine that man has laid Him under an obligation through his understanding of Him and that if there had been no philosophers He would have remained unknown. It is another impertinence to enquire whether God has a tongue wherewith He can speak. Has He not created all heavenly bodies and the earth without physical hands? Does He not see the whole world without physical eyes? Does He not hear us without physical ears? Was it then not necessary that He should also speak?

It is not at all correct to say that all God's speaking has been left behind and that there is nothing in future. We cannot seal up His words and His speech in any age. Without doubt, He is ready to enrich the seekers from the fountain of revelation as He used to do before. The gates of His grace are as open today as they were at any time. It is true, however, that the needs for law and limitations having been fulfilled, all Messengerships and Prophethoods found their perfection at their last point, which was the person of our lord and master, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 10, pp. 363-367]

True knowledge about God depends upon this that we should reach the Living God Who speaks clearly to His favourites and bestows satisfaction and contentment upon them with His Majestic and delicious speech. He speaks to them as one man speaks to another and converses with them as a certainty that is beyond doubt or suspicion. He listens to them and responds to them and hearing their supplications He informs them of their ac-

ceptance. He proves to them that He is God on the one side by His majestic and delicious words, and on the other side, by His miraculous works and His Powerful and Mighty signs. To begin with, by way of prophecy He promises them His support and help and special guidance and then on the other side, in order to augment the greatness of His promises, He causes a whole world to oppose them. Those people use all their power and their deceit and all their devices to frustrate God's promises of support and help and supremacy which He makes to His favourites, but God brings to naught all their efforts. They sow mischief and God uproots it. They kindle a fire and God puts it out. They put forth their utmost efforts and God turns their designs against them.

The righteous ones of God are simple and straightforward and in the presence of God Almighty they are like children in the lap of their mother. The world opposes them because they are not of the world. All sorts of plans and devices are resorted to in order to destroy them. Peoples combine to put them to trouble, and all unworthy ones shoot arrows at them from the same bow, and all manner of calumnies and charges are invented against them, so that somehow they might be destroyed and all signs of them might be wiped off, but God Almighty fulfils His words all through their lives. They are honoured with God's true word which is clear and conclusive, and they are given knowledge of hidden matters, which is beyond the power of man, through the clear word of God, the Mighty and Powerful. On the other hand, through miraculous events which establish the truth of that which they had been told, their faith is strengthened and is further illumined. The kind of knowledge required by human nature for the true recog-

nition of God, is imparted through verbal and factual manifestation of the Divine so that not a particle of darkness is left.

This is the God through Whose verbal and factual manifestations, which comprise thousands of bounties and affect the heart powerfully, a person acquires a living faith and a true and holy relationship is established with God, which removes all personal dirt; and all weakness being excluded, inner darkness is dispelled by the fierce rays of heavenly light and a wonderful change is manifested. Therefore, the religion which does not present God as possessing these attributes and confines faith to ancient tales and fables and such matters as are not seen or heard, is certainly not a true religion. To follow such a fictitious god is like expecting a corpse to work like living beings. A god who does not prove his own existence afresh every time is as if he does not exist. He is like an idol which neither speaks nor hears nor answers questions, nor can he manifest his power in such a manner that even a confirmed atheist should not be able to doubt it.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, pp. 31-32]

OBJECTION: It is disrespectful to affirm that God speaks to man. What relationship can subsist between a mortal and the Eternal and Ever-Existing? What resemblance can there be between a handful of dust and Light itself?

ANSWER: This is a baseless objection. To meet it, it is enough to understand that the Noble and Gracious God has inspired the hearts of perfect human beings with untold eagerness for His own understanding, and has drawn them so powerfully to His love, affection and devotion

that they have been lost to their own selves. To propose in such a case that God would not desire to converse with them would be tantamount to saying that all their love and devotion are vain and that all their eagerness is only one-sided. Such a notion is utter nonsense. Can a seeker of One Who bestowed upon man the capacity to win nearness to Him and made him restless with His own love be deprived of the grace of converse with Him? Can it be true that to be lost entirely in the love of God is both possible and detracts nothing from God's dignity, but that the descent of revelation upon the heart of His true lover is impossible and improper and detracts from God's dignity? Man's plunging into the limitless ocean of God's love and stopping nowhere in that pursuit, is conclusive evidence that man's wonderful soul has been fashioned for the understanding of God. If it is not bestowed the means of perfect understanding, which is revelation, it would have to be said that God did not fashion him for His own understanding. Even the Brahmū Samājists do not deny that the soul of a man who possesses a true nature is hungry and thirsty for the understanding of God.

When it is agreed that a true man naturally seeks understanding of God, and it is established that the perfect manner of the understanding of the Divine is Divine revelation and nothing else, then if that means is impossible of attainment and to seek it is disrespectful, God's wisdom would be open to the criticism that He bestowed upon man eagerness for His Own understanding but did not bestow upon him the means of acquiring such understanding. In other words, He afflicted man with hunger but would not bestow upon him bread enough to satisfy his hunger, or that He afflicted man with thirst, but would not bestow upon him water enough to quench his

thirst. Wise people will understand that such a notion amounts to failure to appreciate God's great mercies. It is a strange logic of the Brahmū Samājists which proposes that the All-Wise Who has made it the good fortune of man that he should be able to witness to the full the rays of Godhead in this very life, so that he should be drawn towards God by this powerful attraction, that that Gracious and Compassionate One does not desire man to arrive at his needed good fortune and at his natural goal.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 230-232, footnote 11]

Whatever God has desired for man, He has in advance invested him with all the faculties that were needed for its achievement. For instance, the human soul possesses a capacity for love. A person through error might love another person and might choose someone as the object of his love, but sane reason can easily understand that this capacity for love has been vested in his soul so that he should love his true Beloved Who is his God, with his whole heart and his whole power and his whole eagerness.

Can we say that this capacity for love, which is vested in the human soul, and whose surge is limitless and at whose high tide man is ready to lay down his life, is inherent in the soul since the beginning of time? Not at all. If God has not created this relationship between man and Himself by vesting the capacity for love in the human soul then this capacity is a matter of chance; that by the good fortune of Permishwar souls were inspired with the capacity for love and that if the chance had been otherwise and this capacity had not been found in the souls, nobody would have ever turned his attention to Permishwar. Nor could Permishwar have devised any plan

in this regard, because existence cannot⁸⁹ come out of non-existence.

But it should also be kept in mind that the demand of Permeshwar for His own worship and for righteous action proves that He has Himself invested the human soul with the capacity for love and obedience. He, therefore, desires that man in whom He has vested these capacities should devote himself to His love and obedience; otherwise, how can Permeshwar desire that people should love Him and should obey Him and should act in accordance with His will?

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 385-386]

Need for Purification

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا⁹⁰

(Urdu couplet):

He who loves the Holy One;

Must purify himself in order to find Him.

Every people claims that there are many among them who love God Almighty, but what needs to be known is whether God loves them or not. The proof of God's love is that first He removes the veil that prevents a person from believing with certainty in the existence of God. Because of this veil man admits the existence of God with dark and blurred understanding and very often at the time of trial denies His existence altogether. The removal of this veil cannot be achieved except through converse with God. A person drinks of the fountain of true under-

⁸⁹ According to the belief of the Āryās. [Translator]

⁹⁰ 'Surely, he prospers who augments it.'—Al-Shams, 91:10 [Publisher]

standing on the day when God addresses him and conveys to him the good news: **I am present.** At that stage man's understanding does not remain confined to conjecture or argumentation. He comes so near to God as if he sees Him. It is entirely true that perfect faith in God is achieved only when He informs a person of His Own existence.

The second sign of God's love is that He not only informs those dear to Him of His existence, but manifests especially to them the signs of His mercy and grace, by accepting their prayers concerning matters which are apparently beyond hope and informing them of it through His revelation and His speech. This reassures them that their God is Powerful Who hears their prayers and informs them of it and delivers them from difficulties. They then understand the mystery of salvation and are convinced of the existence of God. By way of awakening and warning, other people also might occasionally have the experience of true dreams, but the experience of the converse of God is something entirely different. It is vouchsafed only to those who are His favourites. When such a one supplicates God Almighty He manifests Himself to him with His glory and causes His spirit to descend upon him and intimates to him the acceptance of his prayer in His loving words. He who has this experience very frequently is called Prophet or *Muḥaddath*.

[Ḥujjat-ul-Islām , Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 6, pp. 42-43]

A servant displays his sincere love for God by his good behaviour, but God's response is astonishing. In response to the rapid advance of the servant, God rushes towards him like lightning and displays signs for him on earth and in heaven and becomes the friend of his friends and the enemy of his enemies. Even if five hundred million

people oppose him God humiliates them and makes them helpless like a dead insect. He destroys a whole world for the sake of that one person and makes His earth and heaven the servants of such a one. He blesses his words and sends down a rain of light on his dwelling. He puts a blessing in his clothes and his food and even in the dust upon which he treads. He does not let him die a failure and Himself answers all objections raised against him. He becomes his eyes with which he sees, and becomes his ears with which he hears, and becomes his tongue with which he speaks, and becomes his feet with which he walks, and becomes his hands with which he deals with his enemies. He personally takes on the enemies of his friend, draws His sword against the wicked ones who persecute him, and makes him victorious in every field. He conveys to him the secrets of His decrees. The very first purchaser of his spiritual beauty who comes forward after his good behaviour and personal love is God Himself. Then how unfortunate are the people who should live in such an age and such a sun should rise upon them and they should continue to sit in darkness.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21 p. 225]

After perfection of the spiritual structure, the flame of the personal love of God falls upon the heart of a person like a spirit and bestows upon him the condition of being ever present before God. Spiritual beauty manifests itself at its fullest when such a one arrives at his perfection. This spiritual beauty which might be called good behaviour far exceeds the beauty of countenance by virtue of its strong attraction. The beauty of countenance can only win the mortal love of one or two persons and soon declines. Its pull is very weak. But the spiritual beauty which has been called good behaviour is so strong in its

pull that it draws a whole world to itself so that every particle of heaven and earth is pulled towards it. This is the philosophy of the acceptance of prayer.

When a person possessing spiritual beauty who is penetrated by the spirit of Divine love, supplicates for an impossible or very difficult object and carries his supplication to the limit, then on account of his spiritual beauty, every particle of this universe is drawn towards him by the command of God Almighty, and such means are provided as are adequate for his success. Both experience and the Book of God establish that every particle of the world has a natural love for such a person and his prayers draw all particles towards him as a magnet draws iron, and extraordinary matters come to light on account of this attraction which are not mentioned in physics or in philosophy. Ever since the Creator has fashioned the world of bodies from particles, He has invested every particle with that attraction and every particle is a sincere lover of spiritual beauty and so also is every good soul because that beauty is the manifestation of truth. It was that beauty on account of which God commanded the angels:

أَسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ⁹¹

There are many today like Iblīs who do not recognize that beauty, but that beauty has accomplished great things.

The same beauty was in **Noah**, out of regard for which the Lord of Honour and Glory destroyed all his enemies by the torment of water. Then **Moses** appeared with the same

⁹¹ 'Submit to Adam', and they all submitted. But Iblīs did not.—Al-Baqarah, 2:35 [Publisher]

spiritual beauty, and he, after suffering for a few days, became the occasion for the ruin of Pharaoh. Then last of all the Chief of the Prophets and the best of mankind, our lord and master Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] appeared with a grand spiritual beauty in praise of which it is enough to cite the verse:

دَنَا فَتَدَدْتُ ۝ فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَى ۝⁹²

This means that: That Prophet^{SA} drew closer to God and then leaned towards mankind and thus discharged fully that which was due to God and that which was due to man and demonstrated both kinds of spiritual beauty.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, pp. 219-221]

In the article that was read out in the meeting, it was stated that Permashwar is free from anger, rancour, hatred and envy. Perhaps the meaning of the speaker was that in the Holy Qur'ān the word anger has been used with reference to God. In contrast, he desired to convey that the Vedās is free from any affirmation that God becomes angry. But this is his mistake. It should be borne in mind that no undue tyrannical wrath is attributed to God Almighty in the Holy Qur'ān. All that is meant is that, on account of His Holiness, God possesses an attribute which resembles wrath and that attribute demands that a disobedient one who persists in his rebellion should be chastised. God also possesses another attribute which resembles love and that demands that an obedient one should be rewarded for his obedience. The first attribute has been named **wrath** for the purpose of illustration, and the second one has been termed **love**. But

⁹² Al-Najm, 53:9-10 [Publisher]

neither His fury like human fury, nor is His love like human love. God Almighty has said in the Holy Qur'ān:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ⁹³

That is to say: There is nothing like God or His attributes.

We enquire from the speaker why does Permashwar, according to the Vedās, punish sinners, so much so that He degrades them from the status of humanity and makes them dogs, swine, apes and cats, etc. One has to admit that He possesses an attribute that demands such punishment. This attribute is described in the Holy Qur'ān as God's wrath....

If Permashwar does not possess an attribute that demands that He should punish sinners, then why does He incline towards punishment? He must possess an attribute that demands recompense and that attribute is called wrath, but that wrath is not like the anger of man, but is suited to the dignity of God. That is the wrath that is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān.... When God bestows His bounty upon those who act righteously, it is said that He loves them. When He punishes those who act viciously, it is said that He is angry with them. Thus as wrath is mentioned in the Vedās so is it mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān; the only difference being that according to the Vedās the wrath of God in its severity can turn men on account of their sins, into insects, etc. but the Holy Qur'ān does not carry God's wrath to such extremes. The Holy Qur'ān says that despite punishment God maintains the humanity of a person and does not condemn him to some other existence, which shows that according to the

⁹³ Al-Shūrā, 42:12 [Publisher]

Holy Qur'ān God's love and mercy are greater than His wrath, and according to the Vedās the punishment of sinners is unlimited and Permashwar is all anger and has no trace of mercy. It appears clearly from the Holy Qur'ān that a time will come when God will have mercy upon all the dwellers of hell.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 46-50]

Kingdom of God Encompasses Heaven and Earth

The Gospel directs us to pray: "Our Father that art in heaven hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and put us not in temptation, but save us from evil for Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever."⁹⁴

But the Qur'ān says that the earth is not empty of God's Holiness which is proclaimed not only in heaven, but also on earth. As it is said:

وَأَنَّ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهِ ٩٥
يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ ٩٦

These verses mean that:

Every particle of earth and heaven glorifies and proclaims the Holiness of Allāh and; everything in them is engaged in His glorification and praise.

The mountains remember Him, the rivers remember Him, the trees remember Him and many righteous ones are occupied with His remembrance. Whoever fails to

⁹⁴ Matthew 6:9-13 [Publisher]

⁹⁵ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:45 [Publisher]

⁹⁶ Al-Jumu'ah, 62:2 [Publisher]

remember Him in his heart and by his tongue and does not humble himself before God is compelled to humble himself by being put through diverse types of torment by Divine decree. Whatever is recorded of the angels in the Book of God that they are completely obedient to Him, the same is said of every leaf and every particle in the earth. Everything is obedient to Him, not a leaf can fall without His command, no medicine can heal without His command, nor can any food prove agreeable without it. Everything prostrates itself at the threshold of God in extreme humility and worshipfulness and is occupied with His obedience. Every particle of the earth and mountains, every drop of the rivers and oceans, every leaf of trees and plants and all particles of men and beasts recognize God, obey Him and are occupied with His glorification and praise.

That is why God Almighty has said:

يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمُوتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ⁹⁷

That is to say: Everything in the earth glorifies Allāh and proclaims His Holiness as does everything in heaven.

Then how can it be said that God is not glorified in the earth? Such a sentiment cannot be expressed by a person of perfect understanding. Of the things of the earth some obey the commandment of the law and some are obedient to Divine decrees and some are occupied with obedience of both. The clouds, air, fire and earth are all devoted to the obedience and glorification of God.

If any human being disobeys the commandments of Divine law, he follows the commandments of Divine decrees. No one is outside the ambit of these two com-

⁹⁷ Al-Jumu‘ah, 62:2 [Publisher]

mandments. Everyone bows down to the heavenly kingdom in some form or the other. It is true that having regard to the purity and corruption of human hearts, heedlessness and remembrance of Allāh prevail in the earth by turns, but this ebb and flow does not occur by itself, but only in obedience to the Divine will. That happens which God wills. The alternation of guidance and error proceeds like the alternation of day and night according to the light and command of God and not by itself. Despite this, everything hears His voice and glorifies Him. But the Gospel says that the earth is empty of the glorification of God and the reason is indicated in the sentence that follows, namely, that the kingdom of God has not yet arrived on the earth. That is why God's will has not been put into effect on the earth as it operates in heaven. The teaching of the Qur'ān is altogether contrary to this. The Qur'ān states clearly that no thief, murderer, adulterer, disbeliever, disobedient one, rebellious one or offender can commit any evil upon the earth unless he is authorised from heaven. Then how can it be said that the kingdom of heaven does not operate upon earth? Does some adverse possession stand in the way of the enforcement of God's command on the earth? Indeed not.

God Himself made one law for the angels in heaven and another one for man on the earth. In His kingdom of heaven, God has given no choice to the angels. Obedience is inherent in their nature. They are not able to disobey. They are not subject to error or forgetfulness. But human nature has been given the choice of obedience and disobedience. As this choice has been given from above, therefore, it cannot be said that because of a disobedient person, God's kingdom has been excluded from the earth. God's kingdom is in operation all the time and

in every way. Yet it is true that there are two systems of law. One for the angels in heaven, which is the law of Divine decree which the angels cannot disobey, and there is another law which is in operation on earth that man has been given the choice of good and evil. But when a person supplicates God for power to overcome evil, then with the support of the Holy Spirit he can overcome his weakness and can safeguard himself against sin, as is the case with the Prophets and Messengers of God.

In the case of those who have been guilty of sin, asking for forgiveness can deliver them from the consequences of sin and they are spared chastisement in respect of it, for when light comes darkness is dispelled. Those offenders who do not beg for forgiveness suffer punishment for their offences. In these days, the plague has also descended upon the earth as punishment and the rebellious ones are being destroyed. Then how can it be said that the kingdom of God does not operate upon the earth?

Do not be misled by the thought that if there is a kingdom of God upon earth then why is any sin committed? Sins are also subject to the Divine law of decrees. Although the offenders put themselves outside the law of *Shari'ah* they cannot put themselves outside the law of decrees. Then how can it be said that sinners do not bend to the yoke of the Divine kingdom?

If Divine law were to take on extreme harshness and every adulterer were to be struck down by lightning, and every thief were to be afflicted by some disease whereby his hands would become rotten and fall away, and every rebellious one who denies God and His religion were to die of the plague, then before the expiry of a week the whole world would put on the garments of righteousness

and good behaviour. Thus, there is God's kingdom on earth, but heavenly law has bestowed this much freedom that offenders are not immediately seized with punishment. Yet, punishment is also continuously in force. Earthquakes happen, lightning strikes, volcanoes erupt and destroy thousands of lives, vessels sink, many lives are lost in railway accidents, storms are encountered, houses fall, snakes bite, wild beasts rend, epidemics spread and not one, but many doors of destruction are open which Divine law has appointed for the punishment of offenders. Then how can it be said that God's kingdom does not operate upon earth?

The truth is that the kingdom is there. Every offender has handcuffs around his wrists and chains around his feet, but Divine Wisdom has softened its law to a degree that the handcuffs and the chains do not manifest themselves immediately. But if an offender persists in his wrongdoing they carry him to hell and push him into a torment in which he neither lives nor dies.

In short, there are two systems of law, one is that which relates to the angels, which is that they have been created for obedience and their obedience is a characteristic of their bright nature. They cannot commit sin, but also they cannot make progress in goodness. The second system of law relates to mankind, which is that by their nature they can be guilty of sin, but they can also make progress in goodness. Both these natural laws are unchangeable and as an angel cannot become man, so man cannot become an angel. These systems of law are eternal and are not liable to change. The law that operates in heaven cannot operate on earth, nor can the law that operates on earth operate in respect of angels. If human defaults end in

repentance, man can be much better than angels for angels cannot make progress in goodness. Human sins are forgiven through repentance. Divine wisdom leaves some individuals free to commit sins so that thereby they should become aware of their weakness and may be forgiven through repentance. This is the law that is appointed for man and it is suited to man's nature.

Error and forgetfulness are characteristics of human nature and they are not characteristics of angels. Therefore, the law that regulates angels cannot be put in force in respect of men. It is an error to attribute any weakness to God Almighty. It is the consequences of the operation of law that are manifested upon the earth. Is God so weak that His kingdom and power and glory are limited to heaven or is it that there is some other god who is in adverse possession of the earth? The Christians should not emphasise that God's kingdom operates only in heaven and is not yet in operation on the earth, for they hold that heaven is nothing. If heaven, where God's kingdom should operate, is nothing and God's kingdom has not yet arrived upon earth, this would mean that God's kingdom does not rule anywhere. Whereas we observe with our own eyes that God's kingdom is in operation on the earth. According to His law, our lives come to an end and our conditions change continuously. We experience hundreds of types of comfort and pain. Thousands of people die by God's command and thousands are born, prayers are accepted, signs are displayed and the earth produces thousands of types of vegetables, fruits and flowers by His command. Then is all this happening without the kingdom of God? Heavenly bodies seem to continue in one condition and no outward change is felt with regard to them, which should indicate the existence of a Being

Who brings about change. But the earth is continuously undergoing change. Every day millions of people pass out of the earth and millions are born and in every way the control of a powerful Creator is felt. Is there still no kingdom of God on earth?

The Gospel puts forward no reason why the kingdom of God has not arrived on earth. It is true that Jesus prayed for deliverance all through the night in the garden and as it is recorded in Hebrews 5:7 that prayer was accepted, yet God did not have the power to deliver him. This according to the Christians, can be a reason for affirming that at that time there was no kingdom of God upon earth. But I have experienced greater trials and have been delivered from them. How can I deny the kingdom of God. Was that case in which I was, at the instance of Martyn Clarke, charged with conspiracy to murder in the court of Capt. Douglas, less grave than the case which was brought by the Jews against Jesus in the court of Pilate, on account of religious differences and not because of any charge of murder? But as God is the King of the earth as He is the King of heaven, He informed me in advance of that case that such a trial was coming and then He told me that I would be discharged. This was announced to hundreds of people in advance and in the end I was discharged. It was the kingdom of God which delivered me from this case which had been brought against me at the joint instance of Muslims, Hindūs and Christians. Thus not once, but scores of times, I witnessed the kingdom of God upon earth and I had to believe in the verse:

كَيْ مَلِكُ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَ الْاَرْضِ⁹⁸

⁹⁸ Al Ḥadīd, 57:3 [Publisher]

To Him belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth;

and I had to believe in the verse:

إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَنْ يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ فَيَكُونُ⁹⁹

This means that: Heaven and earth obey Him and when He wills a thing and He says to it: Be; it happens at once.

Then He says:

وَاللَّهُ غَالِبٌ عَلَى أَمْرِهِ وَلَئِنْ أَكْثَرِ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ¹⁰⁰

That is to say: God's command over His will is supreme, but most people are unaware of His wrath and Omnipotence.

So much for the prayer taught in the Gospel which takes away man's hope of God's mercy and makes Christians forgetful of His *Rubūbiyyat* and they do not consider God capable of helping on earth till His kingdom should arrive upon the earth. As a contrast the prayer that God has taught to the Muslims in the Qur'ān teaches that God is not helpless in the earth like one dethroned, but that His system of *Rubūbiyyat*, *Rahmāniyyat* and *Rahīmiyyat* are in operation on the earth and that He has the power to help His worshippers and can destroy the offenders with His wrath. That prayer is as follows:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝ مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ۝
 اِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْزُ ۝ اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ۝
 صِرَاطَ الَّذِيْنَ اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوْبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّيْنَ ۝¹⁰¹

This means that: God alone is worthy of all praise. There is no deficiency in His kingdom. Nothing is awaited out

⁹⁹ Yā-Sīn 36:83 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁰ Yūsuf, 12:22 [Publisher]

¹⁰¹ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2-7 [Publisher]

of His excellences which does not exist today, but would be achieved tomorrow. There is nothing vain in His kingdom. He provides for all the worlds. He bestows His mercy absolutely without any prior action on the part of man, and also in return for man's actions. He awards reward and punishment at their due time. We worship Him and seek His help and pray that He should show us the way of all bounties and should keep us away from the ways of His anger and of error.

This prayer which is set out in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* is the antithesis of the prayer taught in the Gospel, inasmuch as God's present kingdom of the earth is denied in the Gospel. Thus according to the Gospel neither God's *Rubūbiyyat*, nor His *Raḥmāniyyat*, nor His *Raḥīmiyyat* nor His *Mālikiyyat* is in operation on the earth because God's kingdom has not yet arrived upon the earth, but *Sūrah Fātiḥah* indicates that God's kingdom is in operation on the earth and thus all the essentials of the kingdom are set out in the *Sūrah*.

It is obvious that a king should possess the following qualities: He should have power to provide for people and *Sūrah Fātiḥah* proclaims that God is the Sustainer of the worlds. The second quality of a king should be that whatever his subjects should need for settling down in the earth should be provided out of his kingly mercy and not in return for any service. *Sūrah Fātiḥah* affirms this quality in God by calling Him *Raḥmān*. The third quality which a king should possess is that he should help his subjects towards achievement of that which they cannot achieve by their own efforts. The *Sūrah* affirms this quality by the use of the word *Raḥīm*. The fourth quality that a king should possess is that he should have power to

reward and punish so that social conditions should not be disturbed. The *Sūrah* affirms this quality in God by describing Him as *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*. In short, the *Sūrah* presents all those essentials of kingship that prove that God's kingdom and kingly control are in operation on the earth....

Listen, the greatest understanding is that every particle of the earth is as much under the control of God as every particle of heaven is part of His kingdom, and that as there is a grand manifestation in heaven there is also a grand manifestation on earth. The manifestation in heaven is a matter of faith. An average person has not ascended to heaven nor witnessed that manifestation, but the manifestation of God's kingdom upon earth is clearly visible to everyone's eyes.

Every human being, however wealthy he might be, tastes of death contrary to his desire. Observe, therefore, how the manifestation of the command of the true King is visible upon the earth that when His command comes no one can delay his death for a second. When a person is afflicted with mortal illness, no physician is able to cure it. Reflect, therefore, what a manifestation of God's kingdom upon earth it is that His command cannot be rejected. How can it then be said that the kingdom of God upon earth is not yet, but will arrive at some future time?

In this age, God's commandment from heaven has shaken the earth with the plague so that it should be a sign for His Messiah. Who is it who can remove it without His command? Then how can we say that God's kingdom has not yet arrived upon earth? The wicked one carries on like a prisoner on earth and does not wish to die, but

God's true kingdom destroys him and the angel of death finally seizes hold of him. Then how can it be said that the kingdom of God has not arrived upon the earth? Every day by God's command millions of people die in an hour and millions are born by His Command and millions of the poor by His command become rich and millions of the wealthy become poor. Then how can it be said that God's kingdom upon earth is not yet?

In heaven there are only angels, but on the earth there are men and also angels, who are agents of God and are the servants of His kingdom. They guard the various enterprises of man, obey God all the time and send up their reports to Him. Then how can it be said that there is not the kingdom of God upon earth?

God has been known mostly through His earthly kingdom for everyone imagines that the mystery of heaven is a secret and cannot be witnessed. In recent times all Christians and their philosophers have denied the existence of heaven on which the Gospels base the whole kingdom of God, but the earth is in fact a globe under our feet and thousands of Divine decrees are manifested thereupon, which make us understand that all this change and birth and death is by the command of some Master. Then how can it be said that there is not yet the kingdom of God upon earth?

God, the Lord of Honour and Glory, has named neither heaven nor earth in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and yet He has disclosed the reality to us by saying that God is *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*. That is to say, all through creation, wherever there are bodies or souls, God is the Creator and Sustainer of all, Who provides for them all the time and administers them. His *Rubūbiyyat*, *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Ra-*

ḥīmiyyat are in operation all the time in all the worlds. It should be borne in mind that by the phrase *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn* in *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, it is not meant that reward and punishment would be awarded only on the Judgement Day. The Holy Qur'ān has repeatedly made it clear that the Judgement Day will be the time of the grand recompense, but that one type of recompense begins in this very world, which is indicated in the verse:

يَجْعَلُ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا¹⁰²

[Kashī Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 32-42]

According to the Holy Qur'ān, God is on earth as well as in the heaven, as He has said:

هُوَ الَّذِي فِي السَّمَاءِ إِلَهٌُ وَفِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَهٌُ¹⁰³

He it is Who is God in heaven and God on earth.

He has also said that no three are gathered together for secret consultation, but that God is the fourth among them.

He is Limitless as is said in the verse:

لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْأَبْصَارُ وَهُوَ يُدْرِكُ الْأَبْصَارَ¹⁰⁴

Eyes cannot reach His limit, but He reaches their limit.

It is also said in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ¹⁰⁵

We are closer to him than his jugular vein.

At one place, it is said that God comprehends everything and it is also said:

¹⁰² 'He creates discrimination between you.'—Al-Anfāl, 8:30
[Publisher]

¹⁰³ Al-Zukhruf, 43:85 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁴ Al-An'ām, 6:104 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁵ Qāf, 50:17 [Publisher]

أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحُولُ بَيْنَ الْمَرْءِ وَقَلْبِهِ ¹⁰⁶

Allāh surely supervenes between man and his mind.

It is also said:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ¹⁰⁷

That is to say: The heavens and the earth are lit up by the light of Divine countenance without which it is all darkness.

It is also said:

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ مِّنْ عِندِهَا يُفَاوِسُ ۚ وَ يَبْقَىٰ وَجْهَ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ ¹⁰⁸

That is to say: Everything is subject to change and destruction, and the only One Who will endure is God.

Human nature is forced to confess that in this universe there is a Being Who is not subject to change and destruction and Who continues to survive all conditions, and He is God. But as sin and disobedience and all manner of unholy things are manifested in the earth, those who confine God to the earth in the end become worshippers of idols and created beings as has happened to the Hindūs.

Concept of ‘*Arsh* in Islām

The Holy Qur’ān has made it clear that on the one side God has a close relationship with His creatures and that He is the life of every thing living and the support of every being. On the other side, to safeguard against the error lest anyone should conclude from the relationship between God and man, that man himself is God, as do

¹⁰⁶ Al-Anfāl, 8:25 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁷ Al-Nūr, 24:36 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁸ Al-Raḥmān, 55:27-28 [Publisher]

the Vedāntists. It is also stated that He is above everything and is beyond everything and that His station is ‘*Arsh* (the Throne). The ‘*Arsh* is not something that has been created or something material. It is the name of the transcendental station which is beyond the beyond. It is not a throne on which God is to be imagined as being seated. It is the station which is beyond of beyond from creation and is a station of transcendence and holiness. As the Holy Qur’ān says, after establishing the relationship of Creator and created with everything, God settled Himself on the ‘*Arsh*. That is to say, despite all relationships He remained apart and did not mix with His creation.

God's being with everyone and comprehending everything is His **attribute of resemblance**. He has mentioned this attribute in the Holy Qur’ān to demonstrate His nearness to man. His being beyond of beyond from all creation and being above all and higher than all and farthest of all and being at the **station of transcendence and holiness**, which is far from creation and is called ‘*Arsh*, is the attribute of transcendence. God has mentioned this attribute in the Holy Qur’ān so that He should establish His Unity and His being without associate and having withdrawn from the qualities of creation. Other people have either adopted God's attribute of transcendence and have called Him *Nirgun*, or they have accepted Him as *Sargan* and have attributed such resemblance to Him as if He was the very creation itself. They have not combined these two attributes, but God Almighty in the Holy Qur’ān has shown His countenance in the mirror of both these attributes and this is **His perfect Unity**.

It is not the belief of the Muslims that the '*Arsh*' is a physical or created thing on which God is seated. You may go through the Qur'ān from the beginning to the end and you will not find it stated that the '*Arsh*' is something limited and created. God has repeatedly said in the Holy Qur'ān that He is the Creator of all things that have any existence. He is the Creator of heaven and earth, and souls and all their faculties. He is Self-Existing and everything exists because of Him. Every particle that exists is His creation. He has nowhere stated that the '*Arsh*' is something physical of which He is the Creator.... Wherever the word '*Arsh*' has been used in the Holy Qur'ān its meaning is the Greatness and Majesty and Supremacy of God. That is why it is not included among created things. There are four manifestations of the Greatness and Majesty of God Almighty. The Vedās call them four gods, but according to the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān they are angels.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol.19, pp. 453-456]

In the Holy Qur'ān by '*Arsh*' is meant the station which is higher than the rank of resemblance and is superior to every world and is beyond of beyond and is the station of Holiness and transcendence. It is not anything which is made of stone or brick or any other thing on which God is seated. That is why it is described as uncreated. As God Almighty says He manifests Himself to the heart of a believer, in the same way He says that He manifests Himself upon the '*Arsh*'. He affirms clearly that He supports everything and has not said anywhere that anything supports Him. The '*Arsh*' which is a higher station than the whole universe, is a manifestation of His attribute of transcendence.

We have explained it several times that since eternity, Divine attributes are of two kinds: the attribute of resemblance and the attribute of transcendence. As it was necessary to set out both attributes in His Word, for the declaration of His attribute of resemblance, He mentioned His hand and eye and love and anger in the Holy Qur'ān, and then to remove the suspicion of resemblance He stated at one place:

لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ¹⁰⁹

and at other places it is said that He settled Himself on the 'Arsh as, for instance, in the verse:

اللَّهُ الَّذِي رَفَعَ السَّمَوَاتِ بِغَيْرِ عَمَدٍ تَرَوْنَهَا ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى عَلَى الْعَرْشِ¹¹⁰

Your God is the One Who raised up the heavens without any pillars, as you can see. Then He settled Himself on the Throne.

From the literal meaning of this verse, it would seem to follow that God was not settled on the 'Arsh before. The explanation of this is that the 'Arsh is nothing material, but is a state of being beyond of beyond which is God's attribute. God created heaven and earth and all other things and bestowed upon the sun and the moon and stars light from His own light by way of reflection and created man, metaphorically speaking, in His Own image and breathed into him His Holy attributes. He thus created a resemblance unto Himself. But as He is free from any resemblance He described His transcendence by the expression of 'settling on the Throne.' Despite having created everything He is not His very creation itself, but

¹⁰⁹ 'There is nothing whatever like unto Him.'—Al-Shūrā, 42:12 [Publisher]

¹¹⁰ Al-Ra'd, 13:3 [Publisher]

is apart from everything and is at a station which is beyond the beyond.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 276-277]

Another objection which is sometimes raised is that it appears from the Holy Qur'ān that on the Day of Judgment eight angels will bear aloft the 'Arsh, from which it is concluded that in this world four angels bear the 'Arsh aloft. Here a question arises that God Almighty is above having His Throne borne up by anyone. The answer is as you have just heard that the 'Arsh is nothing material which can be borne up or is capable of being borne up. The station of transcendence and Holiness is 'Arsh and that is why it is described as uncreated. A material object cannot be outside the creation of God. Whatever has been stated with regard to the 'Arsh is by way of metaphor. A reasonable person can understand that this objection is baseless.

The truth is that when God Almighty withdraws to the station where His attribute of transcendence covers all His other attributes and makes Him beyond of beyond and hidden of hidden, which station, in the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, is called 'Arsh, then God rises above human reason and reason cannot reach Him. Then four of His attributes which have been named four angels which have been manifested in the world, disclose His hidden Being.

The first of these is His *Rubūbiyyat* through which He perfects man physically and spiritually. The manifestation of the body and soul is in consequence of the demand of *Rubūbiyyat*. In the same way Divine revelation and the manifestation of extraordinary signs are in consequence of the demand of *Rubūbiyyat*.

The second attribute which has been manifested is His *Rahmāniyyat* whereby He has provided numberless bounties for man without any action having preceded from man. This attribute also discloses His hidden Being.

The third attribute is His *Rahīmiyyat*. That means, that at first He bestows upon righteous people by virtue of His *Rahmāniyyat* the capacity for righteous action and then, as demanded by His *Rahīmiyyat*, He enables them to perform righteous actions and thus safeguards them against calamities. This attribute also discloses His hidden Being.

The fourth attribute is *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*. This also discloses His hidden Being as by virtue of it He rewards the righteous and chastises the wicked. These four attributes bear aloft His '*Arsh*. That is to say, His hidden Being is recognized in this world through these attributes. This recognition will be doubled in the hereafter, that is to say, eight angels, instead of four, will bear aloft the '*Arsh*.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 278-279]

The Unity of God is a light which illumines the heart after the so-called outer and inner deities are totally negated, and it courses through every particle of man's being. It cannot be acquired by anyone on his own, but only through God and His Messenger. Man's function is that he should impose a death upon his ego and should discard the satanic vanity that he is a learned person. He should deem himself ignorant and should be occupied with supplication. Then the light of Unity would descend upon him from God and would bestow new life upon him.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, p. 148]

As ever since the creation of the world the **recognition of God** is tied up with the recognition of a Prophet, it is impossible that the knowledge of Unity could be obtained except through a Prophet. A Prophet is a mirror for the beholding of God. It is only through this mirror that the countenance of God may be seen. When God Almighty desires to manifest Himself to the world, He sends a Prophet into the world who is the manifestation of His Powers and to whom He displays His *Rubūbiyyat*. Then the world realizes that God is.

It is a part of the Unity of God to believe in those who have been under the eternal law of God appointed as a means of the recognition of God. Without this belief, faith in the Unity of God cannot be perfected. It is not possible to achieve faith in the pure Unity of God, which is created from the fountain of perfect certainty, in the absence of heavenly signs and wonders which are displayed by the Prophets whereby they lead people to full understanding. They are a group that points to God and through whom God, Whose Being is imperceptible upon imperceptible and hidden upon hidden, manifests Himself. That hidden Treasure, Whose name is God, has ever been recognized through the Prophets. The acquisition of faith in the Unity of God, which is estimated as true Unity by God Himself, except through a Prophet, is as much opposed to reason as it is contrary to the experience of all seekers after God.

[*Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, Vol. 22, pp. 115-116]

The true Unity of God, the affirmation of which is demanded by God and upon which salvation depends, is to believe that God in His Being is **free from every associate**, whether it is an idol or a human being, or the sun or

moon or one's ego, or one's cunning or deceit; and to conceive of no one as possessing power in opposition to Him, nor to accept anyone as sustainer, nor to hold anyone as bestowing honour or disgrace, nor to consider anyone as helper or assistant; and to confine one's love to Him and one's worship to Him and one's humility to Him and one's hopes to Him and one's fear to Him. No Unity can be complete without the following three types of particularisation. First, there is the Unity of Being, that is to say, to conceive the whole universe as nonexistent in contrast with Him and to consider it mortal and lacking reality. Secondly, the Unity of attributes, that is to say, that *Rubūbiyyat* and Godhead are confined to His Being and that all others who appear as sustainers or benefactors are only a part of the system set up by His hand. Thirdly, the Unity of love and sincerity and devotion; that is to say, not to consider anyone as an associate of God in the matter of love and worship and to be entirely lost in Him.

[*Sirāj-ud-Dīn 'Īsā'ī ke Chār Sawālon kā Jawāb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 12, pp. 349-350*]

Refutation of the Christians' Faith in the Unity of God

In these days, the Unity and Existence of God are subject to powerful attacks. The Christians have tried hard and have written a good deal on the subject, but whatever they have said or written, is about the God of Islām and not about a dead, crucified and helpless god. We affirm it confidently that whoever begins to write on the Existence and Being of God Almighty, would in the end have to revert to the God that is presented by Islām, because every leaf of the book of nature points to Him and naturally every man carries His impress within himself.

[*Malfūzāt, Vol. I, p. 83*]

The Christians should remember that it is **not at all established that Jesus was the Resurrection**, nor have the Christians been resurrected. They are dead more than the other dead, and lie in narrow and dark graves and are fallen into the pit of paganism. They neither possess the spirit of faith nor the blessings of such spirit. They have not achieved even the lowest grade of faith in the Unity of God, which is to abstain from the worship of creatures. They worship as creator one weak and helpless like themselves.

The Unity of God has three grades. The lowest grade is to abstain from the worship of any created thing like oneself, neither stone nor fire nor man nor any star. The second grade is that one should not be devoted to material means as if they were a sort of partner in the operation of *Rubūbiyyat*. One must concentrate on the Provider of means rather than on the means. The third grade is that having witnessed perfectly Divine manifestations, one should consider every other being as nonexistent including one's own self. Everything beside God Almighty, Who possesses perfect attributes, should appear as mortal to one's eyes. Spiritual life means that these three grades of faith in Unity should be achieved.

Now consider carefully that all eternal fountains of spiritual life have come into the world through Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. It is only the Muslims, though they are not Prophets, who experience converse with God Almighty like the Prophets, and though they are not Messengers, God's bright signs appear at their hands, and the rivers of spiritual life flow through them and no one else can compete with them. **Is there anyone who would**

take up this challenge and, standing in opposition, would exhibit blessings and signs as an answer !!!

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 223-224]

Evils of Associating Partners with God

I regret that I have not found words in which I should set out the evils of leaning towards anyone except God. People cringe before others and flatter them, which invokes the jealousy of God Almighty, and is tantamount to praying to people, from which God withdraws and which He casts aside. I set out the matter in a crude way, though it is not its true reality and yet it is easy to follow. A self-respecting man's jealousy would not tolerate another person establishing a relationship with his wife, as in such a case, he would consider his wretched wife worthy of being killed and very often that is what happens in fact. Similar is the jealousy of the Divine. Servitude and prayer are reserved for His Being. He does not approve that anyone else should be worshipped or should be called on in supplication. So remember well that to lean towards any beside Allāh is to cut asunder from Him. Prayer and Unity—for Prayer is the name of the proclamation of Unity in practice—are without blessing and vain when they are empty of humility and nothingness and are not pursued with a single-minded heart!

[Malfūzāt, Vol. I, pp. 167-168]

Associating others with God takes many forms and is called *shirk*. There is the obvious *shirk* in which Hindūs, Christians, Jews and other idol worshippers indulge, in which a man or stone or lifeless things or faculties or fictitious deities are worshipped as God. Though this form of *shirk* is still current in the world, yet this is the age of light and education, and reason is beginning to

abhor this form of *shirk*. It is true that some people subscribe to these stupidities as part of their national religion, yet at heart they are beginning to be repelled by them.

But there is another type of *shirk*, which is spreading secretly like poison and it is greatly on the increase in this age and that is that there is no trust in and dependence upon God Almighty.

We do not say, nor is it part of our faith, that means should be discarded altogether. For God Almighty has Himself urged the use of means and if means are not used to the extent to which they are necessary, this would be to dishonour human faculties and to defame the grand action of God Almighty in bestowing them. If means are discarded altogether, it would mean that all faculties which God Almighty has bestowed upon man should be left idle and should not be put to any use, which would amount to condemning God's action as vain and useless and therefore a great sin. Therefore, we do not at all mean, nor is it part of our religion, that means should be discarded altogether. The use of means up to the proper limit is necessary. Means are needed for the hereafter also. To carry out the commandments of God Almighty and to avoid vice and to carry out good works is all undertaken so that we should be at ease in this world and the next. Thus righteous conduct is a substitute for means. God has not forbidden use of means for the fulfilling of worldly needs. A public servant should discharge his duties, a cultivator of land should occupy himself with agricultural operations, a labourer should perform his labour so that all of them should be able to discharge the obligations that they owe to their family

and children and other relations and to their own selves.

All this is right up to the proper limit and is not forbidden; but when, transcending that limit, a person places all his trust in the means, that becomes *shirk* which casts a person far away from his true purpose. For instance, if a person says that had it not been for a certain factor, he would have died of hunger, or that if had it not been for a certain property or an occupation, he would have been in bad shape, or if it had not been for a certain friend, he would have been in trouble, this would be displeasing to God. He would not approve that a person should rely so much upon property, or other means or friends that he should stray far away from God Almighty. This is a very dangerous form of *shirk* which is patently contrary to the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān as God Almighty has said:

وَفِي السَّمَاءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوعَدُونَ ¹¹¹

and as He has said:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ ¹¹²

and as He has said:

مَنْ يَتَّقِ اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَهُ مَخْرَجًا ۚ وَيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ¹¹³

and as He has said:

وَهُوَ يَتَوَكَّلُ الصَّالِحِينَ ¹¹⁴

The Holy Qur'ān is full of verses that God is the Guard-

¹¹¹ 'And in heaven is your sustenance, and also that which you are promised.'—Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:23 [Publisher]

¹¹² 'And He who puts his trust in Allāh - He is sufficient for him.'—Al-Ṭalāq, 65:4 [Publisher]

¹¹³ 'He who fears Allāh - He will make for him a way out, and will provide for him from where he expects not.'—Al-Ṭalāq, 65:3-4 [Publisher]

¹¹⁴ 'And He protects the righteous.'—Al-A'rāf, 7:197 [Publisher]

ian of and provides for the virtuous. Then when a person relies wholly upon the means, and puts his whole trust in them, in so doing he ascribes to them some of the attributes of God, and sets them up as another god beside Him. When he leans towards one side, he advances towards *shirk*. Those who lean towards officials and receive bounties and titles from them, honour them as they should honour God and thus in a way worship them. This alone uproots a person's belief in the Unity of God and diverts him from his true purpose and casts him far away. The Prophets [peace and blessings of Allāh be on them] teach that there should be no conflict between Unity and material means and that each should keep to its proper place and that the end should be Unity. They desire to teach man that all honour and all comfort and all fulfilment comes from God. If anything else is set up in opposition to Him there would be a conflict in two opposites in which one would be destroyed. The Unity of God must always prevail. Means should be used but should not be deified.

Belief in Unity gives birth to the love of God Almighty, as one realizes that all benefit and loss is in His hands, that He is the true Benefactor and that every particle proceeds from Him without the intervention of anyone else. When a person achieves this holy condition, he is known as a believer in the Unity of God. One condition of belief in Unity is that man should not worship stones, or human beings, or anything else, and should express disgust and abhorrence against deifying them; the second condition is that no undue importance should be attached to material means. The third condition is that one's ego and its purposes should also be excluded and negated. Very often a person has in mind his own qualities and power and

imagines that he has achieved certain good with his own power and he depends so much upon his power that he attributes everything to it. Real faith in the Unity of God is achieved when a person negatives his own powers also.

[Malfūzāt, Vol. III, pp. 79-82]

The Christian doctrine is that those who do not believe in Trinity and do not subscribe to the atonement of Jesus would be condemned eternally to hell.... To confine Limitless God to three or four partners and to believe that each is perfect in himself and is yet in need of association, and to imagine that God was word in the beginning and that the same word that was God descended into the womb of Mary and acquired a body from her blood and was born in the usual manner and suffered all the ailments of childhood and when he grew up, he was seized and put upon the cross, is abominable *shirk*, whereby man has been deified. God is above descending into a womb and acquiring a body and being seized by His enemies.

Human nature rejects that God should undergo such suffering and that He Who is the Master of all Greatness and is the Fountainhead of all honour should permit such humiliation for Himself. The Christians admit that this was the first occasion of the humiliation of God and that He had never suffered such humiliation before. It had never happened before that God should have been established in the womb of a woman like the sperm. Ever since people had heard the name of God, it had never happened that He should have been born of a woman like a human child. The Christians admit all this and also admit that the three partners in the Godhead did not in

the beginning have three separate bodies, but that at a certain point in time, 1896 years ago, separate bodies were assigned to the three partners. The form of the father is like that of Adam, for He created Adam in His own image (see Old Testament, Genesis 1:27), and the son appeared in the form of Jesus (see John 1:1) and the Holy Ghost assumed the form of a dove. (see Matthew 3:16)....

According to the Christians, these three embodied gods are embodied forever and have separate beings forever and yet all three combined are One God. If anyone can tell us, we should like to know how could all these three be one and yet have separate eternal bodies. Let someone unite Dr. Martyn Clarke and Padre ‘Imād-ud-Dīn and Padre Thākar Dāss into one despite their separate bodies. We can confidently affirm that if the three are beaten into one and their flesh is mixed together, they who were created three by God cannot become one. Since three mortal beings, despite possessing the possibility of assimilation and division cannot become one, then how the three beings about whom the Christians do not admit of the possibility of assimilation and division, can be one?

It would not be improper to say that these three gods of the Christians are like three members of a committee and according to them every commandment is issued by them unanimously or by a majority, as if Godhead were a republican form of government and god **could not run the government on his own** and is dependent upon the decisions of the council.

Such is the compound god of the Christians; let him who wishes take a look at him.

The Christian religion is deprived of the Unity of God. These people have turned away from the True God and have made a new god for themselves who is the son of an Israeli woman. But is this new god all-powerful as the True God is? His own history bears witness against this. Had he been all-powerful, he would not have been beaten up by the Jews, would not have been taken into custody by the Romans and would not have been put upon the cross. When the Jews said that if he came down from the cross on his own, they would believe in him, he would at once have come down, but on no occasion did he demonstrate his power.

As for his miracles, they are far fewer than those of most other Prophets; for instance, if a Christian were to compare the miracles of Prophet Elias, which are set out in detail in the Bible and which include the revival of the dead, with the miracles of Jesus son of Mary, he would have to confess that the miracles of Prophet Elias were grander and more numerous than those of Jesus son of Mary. The Gospels repeatedly mention that Jesus used to drive out evil spirits from those who suffered from epilepsy and this is considered a great miracle, which is regarded as laughable by research scholars. It has now been established that epilepsy is caused by some weakness in the brain or some ulcer in the brain or by some other disease, but no one has asserted that it has anything to do with evil spirits....

Neither the birth of Jesus nor any of his miracles can be cited as proof of his godhead. God Almighty has mentioned the birth of John the Baptist along with the birth of Jesus in order to indicate that as the extraordinary birth of John does not take him out of the category of human

beings, so the birth of Jesus son of Mary does not prove that he was God....

Jesus possessed no extraordinary power. He was a humble person and was characterized by human weakness and lack of knowledge. The Gospels show that he had no knowledge of the hidden, he went to a fig tree in order to eat of its fruit and was not aware that there was no fruit on the tree. He confessed that he had no knowledge of the Day of Judgement. Had he been God, he should have known of the Day of Judgement. He possessed no Divine attribute and there was nothing in him which is not to be found in others. The Christians admit that he died. How unfortunate then is the sect whose god is liable to death. To say that he was revived after his death affords no comfort. What reliance can be placed in the life of one who is liable to death?

[Nasīm-e-Da‘wat, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, Vol. 19, pp. 378-382]

Of what use is a god some of whose faculties fell into a decline like some of the faculties of a person who grows old? Of what use is a god who cannot forgive the sins of his servants till he is flogged, spat upon, kept in custody, or nailed to the cross? We abhor a god who was subdued by the low Jews who had lost their own kingdom. We believe in the True God Who made a poor and helpless one of Mecca His Prophet and manifested His Power and Supremacy in the same age and to the whole world. When the King of Persia sent his emissaries to arrest the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] God Almighty directed His Messenger to tell the emissaries that his God had the previous night killed their god. It is to be observed that on the one side is a claimant to godhood who is arrested by a Roman soldier and is

taken into custody and his night-long supplications are not accepted; and on the other side is a person who claims only to be a Prophet and God Almighty destroys kings who are opposed to him. For a seeker after truth there is a very helpful proverb:

یار غالب شو کہ تا غالب شوی¹¹⁵

What use have we for a religion that is dead and what benefit can we derive from a book that is dead and what beneficence can a god bestow upon us who is dead?

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, p. 353]

That to which they call us is a low idea and a shameful doctrine. Can reason accept that a humble creature who possesses all the qualities of a man should be called god? Can reason tolerate that creatures should flog their Creator and that the servants of God should spit in the face of the Powerful God and should seize Him and should nail Him to the cross and that He should be helpless in their hands? Can anyone understand that a person should call himself God and should supplicate a whole night long and his supplication should not be accepted? Can any heart draw comfort from the idea that God should spend nine months in a womb and be nourished on blood and should be born wailing through the usual channel? Can any reasonable person accept that after an eternity of time God should assume a body and one part of Him should take the form of man and another should take the form of a pigeon and that these bodies should confine Him for ever.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 86-87]

¹¹⁵ Make friends with the Supreme One so that you too should become supreme. [Publisher]

Poems in Glorification and Remembrance of Allāh

Praise of the Lord of All the Worlds (Urdū Poem)

How manifest is the light
Of the Source of all lights,
Turning the Universe into a mirror
For eyes to see His reflection.

When I saw the moon yester-night
I was overwhelmed with longing,
For it reminded me a little
Of the beauty of my Beloved Lord.

His eternal beauty
Has set our hearts afire;
Mention not to us the beauty
Of the Turk or Tartar.

O Beloved! Passing strange and wonderful
Is the spectacle of Your glory all around;
Whichever way we turn,
Is the path that leads to You.

Your own light burns bright
In the resplendent fountain of the sun;
In every star can be seen
The spectacle of Your glowing beauty.

With Your own hands have You
Sprinkled salt upon the souls,
Causing great commotion of love
Among Your anguished lovers.

You have invested each particle
With amazing qualities;
Who can ever decipher
Your boundless mysteries?

No one can fathom
 The extent of Your limitless power;
 Nor can anyone unravel
 The mysteries of this intricate knot.

It is Your beauty that lends charm
 To every beautiful face;
 So are the hues and colours of each flower and garden
 But a reflection of Your loveliness.

The love-laden glances of a beautiful face
 Ever remind us of You;
 Every curly lock points its finger
 In Your direction.

To every believer and non-believer,
 Your countenance alone should be the focal point;
 But alas! the sightless suffer
 From a thousand veils.

O my Beloved, Your enchanting glances
 Are like the sharp sword
 Which cuts off all bondages
 Of loyalty and love for others.

Only to win Your love
 Have I reduced myself to dust;
 Hoping, the pangs of separation
 May be assuaged a little.

Except when I am with You
 I am ever restless;
 Like the sinking heart of a patient,
 Life seems to be ebbing away.

Wherefore this noise in Your neighbourhood?
 Pray, tarry not!
 Lest some love-lorn lover
 Should perish unknown.

(Urdū Poem)

What was ours
Is now wholly of the Beloved.
As of today, we belong to the Beloved;
And the Beloved belongs to us.

God be thanked, I have found
That matchless gem;
It matters not if the heart
Of the people has turned to stone?

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūhānī Khazā'in Vol. 3, p. 458]

(Urdū Poem)

Worship and praise belong to Him Who is Everlasting;
He has not equal or His like.

He alone endures, all else is but perishable;
To love others is only an idle tale.

All are others,
He alone is the darling of my heart;
The only cry of my heart:
'Holy is He Who watches over me'.

Holy is His Divine might,
Grandeur is His alone;
Those close to Him stand atremble,
And angels are awe-stricken.

His Mercy is all-pervasive;
How can one be grateful enough?
We are all His creation;
Love Him we must.

To love others is contrary to His Pride
Blessed be this day;
Holy is He Who watches over me.

Every comfort we enjoy
Is His Gift and Grace;
Every heart is pledged to Him
And is filled with His Grandeur.

We had better submit to Him alone,
For in it lies all felicity and auspiciousness;
Blessed be this day;
Holy is He Who watches over me.

He alone is the Succour and Support of all;
His mercy is manifest.
He alone is Dear to us;
He alone is our Beloved.

He alone is Indispensable;
Everything other than Him is false.
Blessed be this day;
Holy is He Who watches over me.

The favour is Yours, O Lord;
I am but an offering at Your threshold.
You have granted the faith;
You alone are the Protector at all times.

Your Grace covers us every moment;
You are the Most Gracious, Ever-Merciful.
Blessed be this day;
Holy is He Who watches over me.

How can You be thanked enough;
All that is mine, is Yours!
You have filled my home with every bounty;
All darkness vanished when Your light came;

Blessed be this day;
Holy is He Who watches over me.

Epitaph of Mirzā Mubārak Aḥmad (Urdū Poem)

Mubārak Aḥmad, the darling of my heart,
 Pure of countenance, and pure of heart;
 He has departed from us today making the heart sad.
 He said "I feel sleepy"; those were his last words,
 But so soundly he slept as could not be awakened,
 We failed to wake him up though we tried hard;
 He was eight and a few months old when Allāh
 summoned him;
 The Caller is, indeed, the Dearest,
 For Him alone O my heart, lay down your life.

[Durr-e-Thamīn]

(Urdū Poem)

He watches over you while
 You set your heart upon others!
 What does He lack which
 You seek to find in the idols?

 Reflecting upon the sun,
 We did not find that light which is His;
 When we turned to the moon,
 That too was not like the Beloved.

 He is the One, has no partner,
 And is Imperishable;
 All others are prey to death,
 He alone is Eternal.

 All goodness lie
 In loving Him;
 Seek Him alone, O friends,
 Idols are unfaithful.

 Why are you fond
 Of this blighted abode?
 This place a veritable hell,
 Not a garden!

[Tashhīdh-ul-Adh-hān, December 1908]

(Urdū Poem)

Lord! All might and power belongs to You;
By finding You, we attained fulfilment of all our
desires.

Every lover has carved for himself an idol;
But our Beloved alone has captivated our hearts.

He alone is the comfort of our soul and the darling of
our heart;
The same One Who is the Lord of the Creation.

He has dawned upon me through His blessings;
Holy is He Who has humbled my opponents.

My life is tied to the Beloved;
He alone is the Paradise and the Ultimate refuge.

To glorify Him, wherefrom can I seek the power?
A river of love flows in my heart.

How great are Your favours, O my Guide,
Holy is He Who has humbled my opponents.

Your grace knows no limits;
No moment is devoid of it.

Your mercy and favours are countless;
I no longer have the strength to thank You enough.

How great are Your favours, O my Guide,
Holy is He Who has humbled my opponents.

Which path should I follow to get to Your street?
What service should I render of which You are the
reward?

It is love alone which draws me so irresistibly;
It is the Divine alone through Whom I efface my ego.

What is love? Whom should I tell?
What secret is faithfulness? In whom should I confide?

How can I hide any longer this storm?
 Instead I had better scatter my dust to the four winds.

How far removed are we from the mundane world!
 Holy is He Who has humbled my opponents.

[Durr-e-Thamīn]

Praise and Thanks be to the All-Powerful God (Persian poem)

Praise and thanks be to the Lord God;
 It is because of Him that all existence found expression.

This universe is but a mirror of His countenance;
 Each and every particle leads the way to Him.

In the mirror of the heavens and the earth,
 His unique face is reflected in all its glory.

Each blade of grass is aware of His Being;
 Each branch points the way to Him.

The light of the sun and the moon is but a reflection of
 His light;
 Every manifestation is subject to His decree.

Each brain is but a secret among His secrets;
 Each step seeks the portals of His glory.

Every heart's desire is to relish the beauty of His
 countenance;
 Even the one that is lost is really in search of His path.

He created the sun, the moon and the earth;
 He displayed His creative might in millions of forms.

All these creations are but a register of His creativity;
 In which are contained an infinite number of mysteries.

He placed this book of nature before our eyes;
 To remind us of the path to righteousness.

So that you recognize the God Almighty
Who bears no resemblance to the world and all who
dwell in it.

So that it should be a criterion to judge the revelation
from the Beloved;
To enable you to recognize from among thousands, the
ones that are from the Friend.

So that all paths of imposture are blocked;
So that light and darkness can be told apart.

Then whatever the Lord God willed came to pass;
And His handiwork bore witness to His Word.

Idolators and all their pretence
Are pierced by the sharp arrows of these witnesses.

If you call someone else as Gracious God,
The heaven and the earth will spit in your face.

If you invent a son for Him Who is Unique,
All high and low will curse you.

This world is virtually proclaiming aloud:
That God is Unique, All-Sustaining, and without
partner.

He has nor father nor son nor wife;
He is Immutable since eternity.

If the rain of His grace were to slow down for a
moment,
All this creation and the universe would come to
nought.

Take a close look at the laws of nature,
So that you realize the greatness of the Lord of all the
worlds.

A Prayer to the Creator of Heaven and Earth (Persian Couplets)

O Creator of the heaven and earth!
 Open the door of mercy upon me.
 You know the anguish
 I hide from others.

O my Beloved, You are most Subtle and Refined;
 Come and permeate my entire being;
 So that Your Presence fills me
 With transports of joy and delight.

And if You decline this prayer, O Pure One,
 I will die of the pangs of separation;
 I will cry my heart out
 And the whole world will weep with me.

Whether You part from me with anger,
 Or show Your countenance to me with kindness;
 Whether You kill me or free me,
 How can I ever stop loving You!

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, p. 613]

O God, the Relief of my Troubles! (Persian Poem)

O God, my Lord,
 You alone are the Cure of my troubles!

The remedy of our cries, You alone are the balm of our
 lacerated souls!
 And You alone are the comfort of our ailing hearts.

With Your compassion, You have borne every burden
 of ours;
 And with Your grace our trees bear fruit and flowers.

Through sheer grace and mercy You protect us and
 cover our sins;
 With absolute kindness, You are the Friend of the
 friendless.

When a helpless servant of Yours is heart-stricken,
All of a sudden You provide remedy for his ailment.

When a humble one is surrounded by darkness,
And so unexpectedly You cause myriads of suns and
moons to appear.

The beauty, the goodness and charm—all attained
perfection in You;
After seeing You, everything else loses its charm.

Wise is he who is madly in love with You;
He is the light of the company who is fond of You.

His faith suddenly comes alive
Who falls in love with You heart and soul.

Your love becomes evident from his face and;
From every nook and corner of his being Your
fragrance issues forth.

You grant him millions of favours by Your grace;
You make the sun and the moon to lie prostrate before
him.

You are ever ready to support him;
One look at him reminds us of Your face.

Many a marvel in this world
Do You exhibit for his sake.

You do the job and also get it done;
You Yourself make this bazaar flourish.

In an instant You turn dust into something valuable;
So that the whole world gains light from its
manifestations.

When You visit someone with grace;
You transform him from the mundane into the celestial.

Love (Persian Poem)

Love for You is panacea for a thousand ailments;
By Your face! To be captivated by You is freedom
indeed.

To seek refuge in You is not the way of the mad;
For to find refuge in You is ultimate wisdom.

I shall not conceal the wealth of Your love
For keeping Your love secret is an act of infidelity.

I am ready to shed my honour and life for You;
For true friendship lies in surrendering one's life to the
Beloved.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, p. 1]

My love (Persian Poem)

Mention not any king to me,
For I have placed my hopes at another threshold.

The Lord God, Who has granted life to the universe,
He is the Originator, the Creator, the Sustainer.

The Generous, All-Powerful, Reliever of problems,
The Merciful, the Compassionate, Who fulfils all needs.

I lie prostrate at His door, because it is said
'In this world one thing leads to another.'

Whenever I remember that Faithful Friend,
I forget all my friends and relatives.

How can I tie my heart to other than Him;
For I am so restless without Him!

Search not for my heart in my wounded bosom;
For I have pinned it to the apron-strings of the Beloved.

My heart is the Throne of the Beloved;
My head is an offering in the way of the Friend.

How can I describe the extent of His bounties on me;

For His grace is boundless!

How can I ever be able to count His favours;
For His favours are uncountable!

The kind of relationship I have with the Beloved,
Is beyond the comprehension of all.

I cry at His door,
As a woman cries in the pangs of childbirth.

All my time is saturated with His love;
How happy is the time! How blissful the days!

O the garden of my Beloved! I sing Your praises;
For You have freed me from the beauty of gardens and
the joy of spring.

[Ḥujjat-Ullāh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 12, p. 149]

Devotion (Persian couplets)

How beautiful You are, O Captivator of my heart!
How lovely are Your attributes, O Love of my life!

Ever since I beheld Your face, I have given my heart to
You;
Except of You, no one else remains in my world.

I can renounce both the worlds;
But any separation from You burns my bones.

It is easier to consign one's body into fire,
But any separation from You terrifies me out of my
wits.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, pp. 355-356]

Fighting for the Honour of the Beloved (Persian couplets)

O Eternal Friend, Your countenance is enough for me;
Your alley is better for me than a thousands gardens of
paradise.

Even though I look at another sight out of expediency,

All the time my eyes are focussed on You.

If someone attacks my honour,
My way is to show patience, like You do.

Who am I? and what worth is my honour?
My war is for the sake of Your honour.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, p.153]

كُلُّ بَرَكَةٍ مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَتَبَارَكَ مَنْ عَلَّمَ وَتَعَلَّمَ

“Every blessing is from Muḥammad on whom be peace and blessings of Allāh.

Blessed is He Who taught and he who was taught.”
[Divine Revelation]

The Holy Prophet

Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad, the Chosen One
May Peace and Blessings of
Allāh be upon him

بعد از خدا بعشق محمد مخمرم
گر کفر این بود بخدا سخت کافرم

“After God I am inebriated with the love of Muḥammad^{SA};
If this is infidelity, then by God I am a great infidel.”

3

THE HOLY PROPHET^{SA}

Exalted Status of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

That light of high degree that was bestowed on perfect man was not in angels, was not in stars, was not in the moon, was not in the sun, was not in the oceans and the rivers, was not in rubies, emeralds, sapphires, or pearls; in short, it was not in any earthly or heavenly object. It was only in perfect man whose highest and loftiest and most perfect example was **our lord and master, the Chief of the Prophets, the Chief of all living ones, Muḥammad, the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. That light was bestowed on this man and, according to their ranks, upon all those who bore the same colour to some degree.... This dignity was found in its highest and most perfect form in our lord and master and our guide, the immaculate Prophet, the righteous one, testified to by the righteous, Muḥammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 160-162]

I always wonder **how high was the status** of this Arabian Prophet, whose name was Muḥammad, (thousands of blessings and peace be upon him). One cannot reach the limit of his high status and it is not given to man to estimate correctly his spiritual effectiveness. It is a pity that his rank has not been recognized, as it should have been. He was the champion who restored to the world the **Unity of God** which had disappeared from the world; he loved

God in the extreme and his soul melted out of sympathy for mankind. Therefore, God, Who knew the secret of his heart, **exalted him above all the Prophets and all the first ones and the last ones** and bestowed upon him in his lifetime all that he desired.

He is the fountainhead of every grace and a person who claims any superiority without acknowledging his grace is not a man but is the **spawn of Satan**, because the Holy Prophet has been bestowed the key to every exaltation and he has been given the treasury of every understanding. He who does not receive through him is deprived forever. I am nothing and possess nothing. I would be most ungrateful if I were not to confess that I have learnt of the true Unity of God through this Prophet. The recognition of the Living God we have achieved through this perfect Prophet and through his light. The honour of converse with God, through which we behold His countenance, has been bestowed upon me through **this great Prophet**. The ray of this sun of guidance falls like sunshine upon me and I continue illumined only so long as I am adjusted towards it.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, pp. 118-119]

O all ye who dwell upon the earth, and O all human souls that are in the east or in the west, I announce to you emphatically that **the true reality in the earth is Islām alone**, and the True God is the God Who is described in the Qur'ān, and the Prophet who has everlasting spiritual life and who is seated on the throne of glory and holiness, is Muḥammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. The proof of his spiritual life and holy majesty is that by following him and loving him we become recipients of the Holy Spirit and are favoured with the

bounty of converse with God and witness heavenly signs.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 15, p. 141]

The man who in his being and his attributes and his actions and through his spiritual and holy faculties set an example of perfection, in knowledge and action and in sincerity and steadfastness, and was called the perfect man was Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].... The man who was most perfect as man and as Prophet, and came with full blessings, and who through a spiritual revival and resurrection manifested the first Judgement in the world and revived the dead world, that blessed Prophet, **the Seal of the Prophets, the leader of the righteous ones, the pride of the Prophets, was Muḥammad, the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Our Lord, send down on that beloved Prophet that mercy and blessing that Thou hast not sent down on anyone since the beginning of the world. Had that grand Prophet not appeared in the world then we would have no proof of the truth of lesser Prophets like Jonah, Job, Jesus son of Mary, Malachi, John, Zechariah, etc. Though they were favourites and honoured and were beloved ones of Almighty God, they are under obligation to this Prophet that they were accepted in the world as true Prophets.

O Allāh, send down Thy blessings on him and on his people and on his companions, all of them. Our last word is that all praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of the worlds.

[Itmām-ul-Ḥujjah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 8, p. 308]

When we estimate justly, then out of the whole series of Prophets, we find one of high courage and alive and greatly dear to God, the Chief of the Prophets, the pride and the crown of the Messengers, whose name is Muḥammad Muṣṭafā and Aḥmad Muḥtabā [peace and

blessings of Allāh be on him]. By walking under his shadow for ten days one obtains that light which before him could not be obtained in a thousand years.... We have found every light by following the **immaculate Prophet** and whoever follows him will also find it and he will become so accepted of God that nothing will be impossible for him. **The Living God**, Who is hidden from people, will be his God and all **false gods** will be trodden under his feet. He will be blessed everywhere and Divine Power will be with him. *Peace be on him who follows the guidance.*

[Sirāj-e-Munir, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 12, pp. 82-83]

Now under heaven there is only one Prophet^{SA} and only one Book. The Prophet is Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who is higher and more exalted than all Prophets and is the most perfect of Messengers and is the *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'*, and the best of men by following whom we find God Almighty and all the veils of darkness are lifted and the signs of true salvation are witnessed in this very life. The Book is the Holy Qur'ān, which comprises true and perfect guidance and effectiveness, through which knowledge and understanding of the Divine are obtained and the heart is purified of human weaknesses; and being delivered from ignorance, heedlessness and doubts, a person arrives at the stage of complete certainty.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 557-558, sub-footnote 3]

There have been millions of pure-natured people in the world and there will be more in future, but we have found the best of all of them and the highest man of God, whose name is Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا¹¹⁶

We shall leave aside any mention of the holy ones from among those people whose circumstances have not been described in detail in the Holy Qur’ān. We shall express our view only with regard to the Prophets who are mentioned in the Qur’ān like Moses, David, Jesus and other Prophets [peace be on them]. We affirm it on oath, calling God to witness, that if the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had not come into the world, and the Holy Qur’ān had not been revealed, and we had not seen with our own eyes the blessings that we have witnessed, the truth of all past Prophets would have remained doubtful in our eyes.

No reality can be gathered from mere stories, for it is quite possible that they may not be true and it is also possible that the miracles that are attributed to these Prophets might be exaggerations, for no sign of them is visible today. We cannot even ascertain for certain from the Books revealed in the past that God truly exists, or that He speaks to man. But through the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] all these stories became real. We now realize not merely as a statement, but as a matter of experience, what converse with the Divine means and how God's signs are manifested and how prayers are answered. All this we have discovered by following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and what other people relate as stories we have witnessed it all. We have at-

¹¹⁶ ‘Allāh and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! You also should invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutations of peace.’ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:57 [Publisher]

tached ourselves to a Prophet who manifests God to us.
A poet has put it beautifully:

*Muhammad of Arabia, King of both the worlds;
Whose threshold is safeguarded by the Holy Spirit.
I cannot call him God, but I do say;
To recognize him is to recognize God.*

How shall we express our gratitude to God who bestowed upon us the good fortune to follow the Prophet who is a sun for the souls of the righteous as there is a sun for the bodies. He appeared in a time of darkness and illumined the world with his light. He was neither tired nor fatigued till he purified all parts of Arabia from associating partners with God. He is the proof of his own truth for his light is present in every age and true obedience to him purifies a person as the clear and transparent water of a river cleanses dirty linen. Who has come to us with a sincere heart and has not witnessed that light, and who has knocked honestly on that door for whom it has not been opened? But the pity is that most people prefer the lower life and do not desire that higher light should enter into them.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 301-303]

Knowledge of Allāh's Attributes granted to the Holy Prophet

قُلِّدَ رَبِّي زِدْنِي عِلْمًا¹¹⁷

This means: O my Lord! Grant me perfect knowledge of Your greatness, Your ways and Your attributes.

At another place it is said:

وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ¹¹⁸

¹¹⁷ Tā Hā, 20:115 [Publisher]

Reading these two verses together, we find that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] became the *foremost of the Muslims* because he was the most learned in the knowledge of Divine understanding. For this reason, his Islām is the highest of all and he is the foremost of the Muslims. Another verse also indicates the vastness of his knowledge as is said:

وَعَلَّمَكُمَا لَمْ تَكُن تَعْلَمُونَ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا¹¹⁹

(Part Number: 5)

This means that: God Almighty has taught you what you could not have learnt by yourself, and by His grace you are blessed more than anyone else.

That is to say, the Holy Prophet surpassed everyone in his knowledge and understanding of the divine and God Almighty perfumed him with the fragrance of divine understanding more than anyone else. Thus, God has appointed knowledge and understanding as the principal means of obtaining a true concept of Islām.

Though there are other means for obtaining such knowledge, like fasting, Prayer, supplication and carrying out all the Divine commandments, the number of which exceeds six hundred, yet the knowledge of the Greatness of God and of His Unity and of His attributes of Glory and Beauty is basic for everything. He who has a heedless heart and has no understanding of the Divine, cannot obtain the strength to observe the fast, perform Prayer, make supplication, or occupy himself with doing good. All righteous action is incited by understanding of the

¹¹⁸ ‘So am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit.’—
Al-An‘ām, 6:164 [Publisher]

¹¹⁹ Al-Nisā’, 4:114 [Publisher]

Divine and all the other means proceed from it and are its issue.

The beginning of this understanding is the reflection of God's *Rahmāniyyat* and is not the result of any action or any prayer, but is a gift of pure grace. He guides whom He wills and He lets go astray whom He wills.

This understanding is then fostered by righteous action and good faith, till it assumes the form of revelation and descending in the word of God, illumines the whole expanse of the bosom with the light which is called Islām.

Excellence of Obeying the Holy Prophet^{SA}

At the stage of perfect understanding, Islām does not remain a mere phrase, but all its reality that we have described is achieved and the human soul prostrates itself humbly before Divine Unity. Thereupon, from both sides it is announced: Whatever is mine is thine. That is to say, the human soul cries out and confesses: Lord whatever is mine is Thine; and God also speaks and conveys the good news: O My servant, the heaven and earth etc. that are with Me are with thee also. This stage is indicated in the verse:

قُلْ يٰٓعِبَادِيَ الَّذِيْنَ اَسْرَفُوْا عَلٰٓى اَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللّٰهِ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا¹²⁰

(Part Number: 24)

Say: O my servants who have committed excesses against your own selves despair not of the mercy of Allāh, surely Allāh will forgive all sins.

In this verse instead of: *O servants of Allāh*; the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was

¹²⁰ Al-Zumar, 39:54 [Publisher]

commanded to say: *O my servants*. This verse was revealed in this form so that God Almighty might convey the good news of limitless mercies and might comfort those who are broken-hearted in consequence of their sins. Thus, Allāh the Glorious desired to exhibit a sample of His mercies and to make it manifest to what extent He honours His faithful servant with special favours. By adopting the form: *Say: O my servants*; God in effect said: Look at My beloved Messenger and see at what high rank he has arrived through his perfect obedience to Me that now all that is Mine is his. He who desires salvation should become his servant. That is to say, he should obey him so perfectly as if he was his slave. Then whatever sins he might have committed will be forgiven him. The word ‘*abd*’ in Arabic idiom also means slave as it is said:

وَلَعَبْدٌ مُّؤْمِنٌ خَيْرٌ مِّنْ مُّشْرِكٍ . . . 121

In the verse to which we have drawn attention, it is indicated that he who desires salvation should establish the relationship of a slave with this Prophet. That is to say, he should not step outside his commandment and should consider himself bound to his obedience as a slave is bound and he would then obtain salvation. One pities those benighted souls who bear such rancour towards the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that they consider that names like Ghulām Nabī, Ghulām Rasūl, Ghulām Muṣṭafā, Ghulām Aḥmad and Ghulām Muḥammad, amount to associating the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] with God, whereas the verse indicates that these names are a means of salvation. As ‘*abd*’ implies that a person so named

¹²¹ ‘A believing slave is better than an idolater.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:222
[Publisher]

should refrain from every kind of freedom and self-direction and should be completely obedient to his master, therefore, the seekers after truth have been urged that if they wish to attain salvation they should adapt themselves to this condition. This verse has the same connotation as the verse:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ¹²²

Perfect following demands that devotion and full obedience which is conveyed in the expression ‘*abd*’. The verse: *Say: O my servants*; means in effect: *Say: O my followers*, who are involved in sins, despair not of mercy of Allāh; for Allāh, through the blessing of your following me, will forgive all your sins. If the word servants in this verse is construed as meaning the servants of Allāh, the meaning of the verse is perverted for it cannot be true that God Almighty would forgive all idol worshippers and disbelievers without their believing in and following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Such an interpretation would be contrary to the express directions of the Holy Qur’ān.

It should be remembered that the purport of the verse is that those who become the sincere servants of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] will be bestowed the light, the faith, the love and the passion which will deliver them from all that is beside Allāh, and they will be freed from sins and will be bestowed a pure life in this world and they will be delivered from the narrow and dark graves of human passions. This is indicated by the *Ḥadīth*:

¹²² ‘Say, If you love Allāh, follow me: then will Allāh love you and forgive you your faults.’—Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:32 [Publisher]

إنا الحاشر الذى يحشر الناس على قدمي¹²³

That is, I am the resurrector at whose footsteps the dead are raised.

The Holy Qur'ān is full of the idiom that the world had died and that God Almighty revived it through sending the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as is said:

لَعَلَّكُمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا¹²⁴

Know that Allāh revives the earth after its death.

In the same way, it is said with reference to the companions of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]:

وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ¹²⁵

This means that God helped them with the Holy Spirit.

The help of the Holy Spirit is that it revives the hearts, delivers from spiritual death, bestows pure faculties, pure senses and pure knowledge, and carries a person to the station of nearness to God through certain knowledge and conclusive arguments.... This knowledge on which salvation depends cannot be obtained without that life which is bestowed through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Qur'ān affirms it emphatically that that spiritual life is obtained only through following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and that all those who repudiate obedience to him are dead and do not possess that life. Spiritual life means the intellectual and active faculties which are brought to life by the Holy Spirit.

¹²³ Bukhārī

¹²⁴ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:18 [Publisher]

¹²⁵ Al-Mujādilah, 58:23 [Publisher]

The Holy Qur'ān shows that the commandments of God to which He desires man to conform are six hundred. In consonance with this the wings of Gabriel are also six hundred. Till the egg of humanness lies under the wings of Gabriel bearing these six hundred commandments, it cannot hatch the baby of being completely lost in Allāh. The reality of man has the capacity of six hundred eggs. A person whose six hundred eggs are covered by the six hundred wings of the capacity of Gabriel is the perfect man whose spiritual birth is perfect and whose life is perfect. If one looks with care one finds that the spiritual issue of the egg of humanness which by the blessing of the following of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were born to the Holy Spirit, are more perfect and complete than the spiritual children of all the other Prophets. This is indicated by the verse:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ¹²⁶

You are the best of people who have been created for the good of mankind.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 186-197]

Revival of the Faith in Unity through the Holy Prophet^{SA}

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] came into the world to bestow hearing on the deaf, who had continued in that condition for hundreds of years. Who is blind and who is deaf? The one who does not accept the Unity of God and who does not accept this Prophet who revived the Unity of God on the earth. The same Prophet who converted the wild ones into men and then converted them into men possessing true moral qualities, then dyed them in the **Divine colour** of those

¹²⁶ Āl-e-Imrān, 3:111 [Publisher]

who establish **their relationship with God**; the same Prophet, the sun of righteousness, at whose feet thousands of those who had died of paganism and atheism and evil living were revived and came to life and a sample of the Judgement Day was exhibited. It was not mere talk like that of **Jesus**. The Prophet who appeared in **Mecca** and dispelled the darkness of paganism and that of the worship of man, was the **true light of the world**, who found the world in darkness and bestowed such light upon it that he converted a dark night into day.

What was the world before his advent and what did it become after it? This is not a question that is difficult to answer. If we are faithful our conscience will tug at us to persuade us to believe that before **that great personage** the greatness of God had been forgotten by the people of every country and it had been assigned to **avatārs, stones, stars, trees, animals, and mortal men**, and despised creation was seated in the place of that **Lord of Glory and Holiness**. It is true that if these men and animals and trees and stars were in fact God, **Jesus** being one of them, then this Prophet was not needed, but if they were not God, the **claim that our lord Muḥammad** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] **made on the hill of Mecca** has a grand light attending upon it. What was that claim? It was that God, having found the world in the deep darkness of associating partners with God, had sent him to dispel that darkness. It was not only a claim, but a claim fully established by the Holy Prophet^{SA}.

If the superiority of any Prophet can be established by such works as proclaim true sympathy with mankind exceeding that of all other Prophets, then, O ye people, arise and bear witness that in this respect Muḥammad

[peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] **has no equal in the world....** Blind worshippers of creatures have not recognized that great Prophet^{SA} who set forth thousands of examples of true sympathy with mankind. I perceive, however, that the time has arrived when this Holy Messenger^{SA} would be recognized. If you wish you might **record my statement** that henceforth the **worship of the dead** will decline daily till it disappears altogether. Will man set himself up against God? Will a despised drop frustrate the designs of God? Will the projects of mortal man disgrace Divine commandments? **O ye who can hear, listen, and O ye who can reflect, consider and remember that truth will be proclaimed and he who is the true light will shine forth.**

[Majmū'a Ishtihārāt, Vol. 2, pp. 305-307]

It is my personal experience that to obey the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] with a sincere heart and to love him, ultimately makes a person beloved of God. God creates in his heart a burning for His Own love and such a one, withdrawing his heart from everything else, leans towards God and his affection and desire remain only for God Almighty. Thereupon a special manifestation of Divine love falls upon him and, bestowing upon him the full colour of love and devotion, pulls him towards itself with great force. He then overcomes his passions and from every direction extraordinary works of God Almighty appear as signs in his support and to help him.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, pp. 67-68]

It is my personal experience that through invoking blessings upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], Divine grace in the shape of wonderful light

proceeds in the direction of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and is absorbed into his breast and then issuing therefrom numberless streams of it reach everyone deserving them according to his capacity. Certainly, no grace can reach anyone without the agency of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Invoking blessings on the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] brings into movement his throne from which these streams of light issue. He who desires to obtain the grace of God Almighty should invoke blessings on him persistently, so that divine grace might be moved.

[Al-Hakam, 28 Feb. 1903, p. 7]

One night this humble one invoked blessings on the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to such a degree that my heart and soul were filled with its fragrance. That night I saw in my dream that angels were carrying water skins full of light into my house and one of them said to me: These are the blessings that you invoked upon Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 1, p. 598, sub-footnote 3]

Bounties of Allāh upon the Followers of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

We should not let a doubt enter our minds how a mere follower can partake of the names, attributes, and praises of that accepted Messenger [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. It is true that in reality even a Prophet cannot share equally in the holy excellences of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Indeed even all the angels cannot claim equality in that respect, let alone that anyone else should share in his excellences. But O

seeker after truth, may God guide you aright, listen carefully to this. With the object that the blessings of that accepted Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] should be displayed forever and that the perfect rays of his light should confound and refute his opponents, God Almighty has made the following arrangement by His wisdom and mercy. Some individuals out of the followers of Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who obey him with thorough humility and falling prostrate on the threshold of humbleness are completely lost to their ego, being found by God like a clear mirror, exhibit the blessings of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in their humble selves. Whatever praise is bestowed upon them by God and whatever signs and blessings are manifested by them, the true source of all their praise and the perfect fountainhead of all those blessings is the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. In reality and in their perfection, those praises are worthy only of him and he is their perfect exemplar, but as the follower of the way of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] becomes through his perfect obedience like a reflection of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], the divine lights which are focussed on and manifested in the holy being of the Holy Prophet are also manifested and reflected in his followers. The appearance in the shadow of the whole form and manner of the reality is a matter that is not hidden from anyone. This shadow is not established in itself and no superiority is in reality present in it. All that appears in it is a picture of the real one which is manifested in the reflection. Do not, therefore, consider it a loss that the inner lights of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on

him] reach those who are perfectly obedient to him out of his followers.

Two great matters result from this reflection of lights, which, like permanent grace, manifests itself in some members of the following of Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. One is that the extreme perfection of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is thereby displayed; for a torch from which other torches can be lit and are ever lit, is better than a torch from which no other torch can be lit. Secondly, the perfection of the Muslims and their superiority over the followers of other religions is established by this permanent grace and the proof of the reality of the religion of Islām are furnished afresh and reliance is not had only upon the past. This is the manner in which the lights of the truth of the Holy Qur'ān shine forth like the sun, and the proof of Islām is established conclusively as against its opponents, and the disgrace, humiliation and frustration of the enemies of Islām is made manifest. They observe in Islām those blessings and light the like of which they cannot find in the ministers and pundits of their own religion. *Consider this well, O true seeker, May Allāh help you in your search....*

How great is the station of the *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'* [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and how excellent is the bright effectiveness of this sun of righteousness that obedience to him makes someone a perfect believer and someone else a recognizer of God and bestows upon a third one the rank of a Sign of Allāh and a Proof of Allāh and bestows upon him Divine praise.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 1, pp. 268-271, sub-footnote 1]

Ever since the appearance in the world of the sun of

righteousness in the blessed person of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] up to this day, thousands of persons who possessed the capacity and the ability, by following the Divine word and obeying the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], have arrived at the high ranks that we have mentioned and continue to do so. God Almighty continuously bestowed upon them such favours, bounties, support and help that it is proved to those possessing clear sight that such people are Divine favourites, who are under the grand shadow of Divine bounty and are recipients of great grace. Observers can see clearly that these people are honoured with extraordinary favours and are distinguished by wonderful signs and perfumed with the fragrance of love and enjoy the pride of being accepted of God. The light of the All-Powerful so fills their companionship, their attention, their resolve, their moral qualities, their way of living, their joy, their anger, their desire, their dislike, their movement and their rest, their speech and their silence, and their outer and inner selves, as a clear and transparent glass receptacle is filled with excellent perfume.

By the grace of their companionship and their relationship and love, that is achieved which cannot be achieved by great effort. By establishing a relationship with them and thinking well of them, one's faith assumes a new complexion and strength is gained for the display of good morals. The tendency of the ego towards clamour and sinfulness begins to be restrained and contentment and sweetness are generated. According to one's capacity, the eagerness of faith surges up, and love and devotion are manifested, and delight in the remembrance of Allāh increases. A person who keeps their company for a long

time is compelled to confess that in the strength of their faith, in their moral qualities, their cutting off from the world, their attention towards God, their love of the Divine, their kindness towards God's creatures and in fidelity, acceptance of the will of God and steadfastness, they occupy such high rank as is not equalled in the world. Sane reason immediately discovers that the chains and shackles in which other people are bound have been removed from their feet, and that the narrowness and constriction whereby the bosoms of other people are constricted and fatigued, have been removed from their bosoms. They are honoured by continuous converse with the Divine and they are accepted as a means of approach between the Divine and His eager servants for the purpose of gaining direction and guidance. Their brightness illumines other hearts.

As vegetation bursts forth at the approach of spring, in the same way, at the advent of such holy persons, natural lights surge inside pure souls and the heart of every fortunate one desires to bring into display, with full effort, its capacities, and is delivered from the veils of deep sleep, and is relieved of sinfulness, the stains of vice, and the darkness of ignorance and unawareness. Their blessed age has such a characteristic and there is such spreading of light in it that every believer and seeker after truth, according to the strength of his faith, without any apparent cause, perceives in his soul an expansion and an eagerness for religion and an increase in and strengthening of resolve. Every sincere one receives the benefit of the delicate perfume which is bestowed upon them on account of their perfect obedience, according to the degree of his sincerity.

Those who are eternally unfortunate obtain no share of it, but continue to increase in their enmity, envy and ill will, and finally fall into hell. This is indicated in the verse:

خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ¹²⁷

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 529-532, sub-footnote 3]

The claim of our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] shines forth like the sun and it is a great proof of his eternal life that his grace flows eternally. Even in this age a person who obeys the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is raised from the dead and is bestowed a spiritual life not merely in imagination, but through the display of his righteous effectiveness and of heavenly help and blessings and extraordinary support of the Holy Spirit. He becomes a unique person from among all mankind, so much so that God Almighty talks to him, discloses His special mysteries to him, communicates His verities to him, manifests the signs of His love and favour in him, causes His help to descend upon him, places His blessings in him, and makes him the mirror of His *Rubūbiyyat*. Wisdom flows from his tongue, and the fountains of fine points burst out of his heart. Hidden secrets are made manifest in him. God Almighty bestows a grand manifestation upon him and comes close to him. In the acceptance of his prayers, in the opening of the doors of understanding, in the disclosure of hidden mysteries and in the descent of blessings upon him, he ranks high and is supreme over all others.

Having been commissioned by God Almighty, this humble one despatched several thousand registered letters to

¹²⁷ 'Allāh has set a seal on their hearts.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:8 [Publisher]

well-known opponents of Islām in Asia, Europe and America about these matters, so that these matters might be conclusively established. I invited them that if anyone claimed that spiritual life could be achieved by any other means, without following the *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'* [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] he should come forth in opposition to me, and that failing this he should come to me as a seeker after truth, in order to witness the blessings and signs that are bestowed on me; but no one offered to come with sincerity and good faith and by keeping aloof they proved that they are all floundering in darkness.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 221-222]

We know for certain that the greatest Prophet of God and His best beloved is Muḥammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. The followers of other Prophets are in darkness having nothing with them except old stories and tales. But the Muslims always receive fresh signs from God Almighty. Therefore, among Muslims there are found many persons of understanding, who believe in God with such certainty as if they beheld Him; but other people have not this certainty concerning God Almighty. Therefore, our soul bears witness that the true and right religion is **Islām** alone....

The miracles of our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] are not mere stories. By obeying the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] we experience those signs ourselves and, through the blessings of observation and experience, we arrive at complete certainty. How high is the status of that perfect and Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] whose Prophethood always furnishes fresh proof to

seekers, and by the blessings of witnessing continuous signs, we arrive at the stage where we see God Almighty with our own eyes, as it were. Thus, true religion is that and the true Prophet is he, the fresh spring of whose truth should always be witnessed. To rely upon mere stories which are subject to all kinds of exceptions does not commend itself to the wise. Hundreds of people have been deified in the world and they are believed in on the basis of hundreds of old tales, but the truth is that the true miracle worker is he the river of whose miracles never dries up. That person is our lord and master the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

In every age, God Almighty has raised someone to display the signs of that perfect and holy one. In this age, He has sent me with the title of **Promised Messiah**. Signs are being shown from heaven and all sorts of extraordinary events are coming to pass. Every seeker after truth can come and stay with me and witness these signs, whether he is a Christian, a Jew or an Āryā. All these are the blessings of our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

محمدؐ است امام و چراغ ہر دو جہاں محمدؐ است فروزندہ زمین و زماں
خدا نگویش از ترس حق مگر بخدا خدا نما است وجوش برائے عالمیاں¹²⁸

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 155-157, footnote]

The proof of spiritual life is to be found in the blessed person of the Holy Prophet [peace and thousands of mer-

¹²⁸ Muḥammad is the Imām and light of both the worlds;
He it is who illuminates time and space.

For fear of offending God, I dare not call him God, but, by God;
For mankind, the Holy Prophet is the sure guide to Him. [Publisher]

cies of God be on him]. Profitless is the life which has no beneficence and useless is the existence which has no grace. There are only two lives which are worthy of praise. One is the life of the Ever-Living and Self-Existing God, Who is the Source of all beneficence; and second is the life which is beneficent and points to God. We can show that such was the life only of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to which heaven has borne witness in every age and does so today. He who does not lead a beneficent life is dead and not alive. I call God to witness that He has furnished to me proof of the everlasting life and full glory and perfection of our master Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to whom all obedience is due, and through following him and loving him I have seen heavenly signs descend upon me and I have found my heart filled with the light of certainty. I have witnessed so many divine signs that through their manifest lights I have beheld my God.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 15, pp. 139-140]

To the degree that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] appears in the extreme of meekness and humility, to the same degree does he seem to be aided and illumined by the support and light of the Holy Spirit, as he has demonstrated in action and conduct. The circle of his lights and blessings is so vast and extended that its sample and reflection is visible eternally. The Divine grace and bounty that is descending in this age is obtained only through following and obeying him. I say truly that no one can be held to be righteous and the winner of the pleasure of God Almighty, nor can he be the recipient of the bounties, blessings, understandings, veri-

ties and visions which are bestowed at the highest degree of the purity of the soul, till he is completely lost in his obedience to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. This is affirmed in the Word of God as it is said:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

I am the practical and living proof of this Divine promise. You will recognize me through the signs of those who are loved by God Almighty and are His friends which are set out in the Holy Qur'ān.

[Malfūzāt, Vol. I, pp. 203-204]

The necessary consequence of following in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] the essentials of which are his love, respect and obedience, is that a person becomes the beloved of God and his sins are forgiven, and if he has swallowed the poison of sin, that poison is rendered harmless through the antidote of love and obedience. As a person can get rid of a disease by the use of medicine, in the same way, a sinner can be purified of sin. As light dispels darkness and an antidote destroys the effect of poison and fire consumes, in the same way true obedience and love prove their effect. As fire consumes in an instant, the eager doing of good for the manifestation of God's glory acts like fire in consuming the fuel of sin.

When a person believes sincerely in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and accepting his greatness, follows him with eagerness, love and obedience, so much so that through perfect obedience, he

¹²⁹ 'Say, If you love Allāh, follow me: then will Allāh love you.'—
Āl-e-ʿImrān, 3:32 [Publisher]

arrives at the stage of non-existence, he, on account of this close relationship with him, also partakes of the Divine light which descends upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Then as light and darkness are opposed to each other, his inner darkness begins to be dispelled till no part of it remains inside him and, being strengthened by light, good of the highest type proceeds from him and the light of the love of God shines forth through all his limbs. His inner darkness is wholly dispelled and he enjoys light intellectually as well as in conduct and by the combination of these lights, the darkness of sin departs from his heart.

It is obvious that light and darkness cannot subsist together, and thus the light of faith and the darkness of sin can also not subsist at one place. If such a person has not been guilty of any sin, his power to commit sin is suppressed altogether and he becomes eager to do good as Almighty Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān:

حَبَّبَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَزَيَّنَهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ
وَكَرَّهَ إِلَيْكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْعِصْيَانَ ¹³⁰

[Review of Religions—Urdu, Vol. I, No. 5, pp. 194,195]

The position of being loved and accepted by God and of becoming His friend, the signs of which have been briefly set out, cannot be achieved without implicit obedience to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. It is not possible for a Christian, an Āryā, or a Jew, to show the signs and proofs of his acceptance by God in opposition to a true follower of the Holy Prophet

¹³⁰ ‘Allāh has endeared the faith to you and has made it look beautiful to your hearts, and He has made disbelief, wickedness and disobedience hateful to you.’—Al-Ḥujurāt, 49:8 [Publisher]

[peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. There is a clear way of determining this. No opponent, Christian or other, of a righteous Muslim who is a true follower of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], can stand up and claim that he will exhibit the same type of signs which appear from heaven in support of the Muslim, or will display similar hidden mysteries as are displayed by him, or similar Divine help through acceptance of prayer, which might be manifested by him, or natural occurrences of the same type which might appear in his honour, or a prophecy of Divine favours or a prophecy warning an enemy of his of his dire end. None of them will come out to oppose a true follower of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in this manner, inasmuch as their hearts bear witness that they are liars and that they have no relationship with the True God Who is the Helper of the righteous and Friend of the faithful.

[Taṣḍīq-un-Nabī, pp. 45-46 or Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmadiyya, Vol. 3, pp. 78,79)]

To believe in God's Messenger is a condition precedent to believing in the Unity of God. One cannot be separated from the other. A person who claims to believe in the Unity of God without following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], possesses only a dry bone which has no marrow and is holding a dark lamp which gives no light. Anyone who thinks that a person who believes in God as One without associate and does not believe in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] will yet achieve salvation, has a **leprous** heart and is blind and has no notion what Unity of God means. Satan is better than him in his profession in the Unity of God, inasmuch as Satan, though he is disobedient, yet he believes that God is present, and such a

person has no faith in God.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 22, p. 122]

Advent of Holy Prophet^{SA} is like the Coming of God Almighty

If it is asked that if the Messiah and I have attained to this rank then what rank is left for our lord and master, the best of the Messengers, *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'*, Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] the answer is that it is a high and exalted rank which is special to him, the appreciation of which is not possible for anyone else, let alone that any one else should be able to achieve it....

The degrees of nearness to God and love of God from the point of view of spiritual rank are of three types. The **lowest degree**, and even that is very high, is that the fire of Divine love should warm the heart possibly to such a degree that the warmed heart might acquire the qualities of fire, but that it should lack the brightness of the fire. When the flame of God's love falls upon this degree of love the warmth generated by that flame in the soul is described as contentment and satisfaction and is sometimes named an angel.

The **second degree** of love is where the fire of Divine love, which is generated by the union of two loves, warms the heart to such a degree that it produces a brightness which is not inflammatory. It is described as *Rūḥ-ul-Qudus*—the Holy Spirit.

The **third degree** of love is where a burning flame of Divine love falls on the eager ribbon of human love and sets it afire and, assuming control of all its particles, makes it a complete and perfect manifestation of itself. In

this condition the fire of Divine love not only bestows a brightness upon the human heart, but simultaneously the whole being is set on fire and its flames illumine the surroundings like the bright day, and no darkness is left and the whole of the being is converted into fire with all its full qualities. This condition which is created by the union of the two loves like a flaming fire is known as *Rūḥ-ul-Amīn*, **the Spirit of Security**, for it bestows security against every darkness and is free from every opaque-ness. It is also called **the strong faculty**, for it is the most powerful revelation, stronger than which cannot be imagined. It is also called **the high horizon**, inasmuch as it is the manifestation of the highest form of revelation. It is also described as: **He saw what he saw**; for an appreciation of this condition is beyond the imagination or thinking of the whole of creation. This condition has been bestowed upon only one human being who is **the perfect man** with whom the whole human system has come to an end and the circle of human capacities has been perfected. In truth, he is the highest point of the extended line of God's creation which is the ultimate of all grades of exaltation.

Divine Wisdom having started the creation from the lowest point carried it to this highest point, the name of which is Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and the meaning of which is greatly praised, that is to say, the manifestation of perfect excellences. As by his nature the station of this Prophet^{SA} was at the highest, so externally also he was bestowed revelation and love at the highest level. This is the high station which neither Jesus nor I can reach; its name is the **station of getting together** and the **station of perfect Unity**. The previous Prophets who have prophesied the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] have

mentioned this station. As the station of Jesus and myself is such that metaphorically it can be described as **sonship**, in the same way, the station of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is so grand that past Prophets have metaphorically described the appearance of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as the appearance of God Almighty and **his coming has been described as the coming of God Almighty**.

[Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 62-64]

It is not only Jesus who has described the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as the appearance of God Almighty, but other Prophets in their own prophecies have used similar terms and have metaphorically described his advent as the appearance of God Almighty, and because of his being the perfect manifestation of God, have called him God. In Psalms of David it is said:

Thou art fairer than the children of men; Grace is poured into thy lips; Therefore God hath blessed thee forever (i.e., You have been granted the station of ***Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'***).

Gird thy sword upon Thy thigh, O most mighty; with thy glory and with thy majesty.

And in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth and meekness and righteousness; and thy right hand shall teach thee terrible things.

Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee. Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.

Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness: therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Psalms 45)

The words: “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: the sceptre of Thy Kingdom is a right sceptre;” are metaphorical; the purpose being to display the spiritual glory of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

A similar statement appears in Isaiah, where it is written:

Behold My servant whom I uphold; Mine elect in whom My soul delighteth: I have put My Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth Judgement in the Gentiles.

He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

A bruised reed shall he not break and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth Judgement unto truth.

He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set Judgement in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law....

The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man, He shall stir up jealousy like a man of war.¹³¹

The words: ‘The Lord shall go forth as a mighty man,’ are a metaphorical description of the awe-striking advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. (See Isaiah, Chapter 42). Many other Prophets have used this metaphor in their prophecies concerning the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Taudīh-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, Vol. 3, pp. 65-67 footnote]

Holy Prophet^{SA}’s Station of Intercession

The question of salvation and intercession is a grand religious subject and the whole purpose of following a religion culminates in it. For testing the truth of a relig-

¹³¹ Isaiah 42:1-4, 13 [Publisher]

ion, it is a clear and open criterion through which it can be known with full satisfaction that such and such religion is true and from God. It is absolutely correct that a religion which has not set forth this question properly or which is unable to show among its followers with clear distinction present samples of those who have attained salvation, needs no other argument to establish its falsehood; but the religion which has correctly displayed the true reality of salvation and has put forth such men in its present stage, into whom the spirit of salvation has been fully breathed, has set a seal on its being true and from God.

It is quite clear that man by nature feels that he stands in need of a strong hand to help him out of hundreds of kinds of negligence, veils, onslaughts of the self, weakness, and ever-prowling darkness, as well as continuous fears and doubts from the various kinds of worldly trials and tribulations. Inasmuch as man is weak by nature, he cannot for one moment trust himself to emerge from the darkness of the ego. This is the testimony of human conscience. Besides, common sense also demands that an intercessor is needed for salvation, for God Almighty is in the highest station of Holiness and Purity, and man is in the extreme pit of darkness and sinfulness, and on account of lack of relationship and resemblance, the average human person is not fit that he should attain salvation by receiving Divine grace direct. Therefore, Divine Wisdom and Mercy demanded that some perfect individuals, who possess a special purity in their nature, should serve as a means of approach between mankind and God Almighty. They should be people whose natures should have taken on a portion of heavenly qualities and a portion of earthly qualities, so that on account of the

appropriateness of their heavenly qualities they should receive Divine grace, and on account of their earthly qualities, they should convey this grace which they have received from above to mankind.

It is quite correct to say that men of this type, on account of the perfection of their heavenly and earthly qualities, possess a special distinction among men. They are in a way a different kind of creation. The eagerness which they possess for the manifestation of God's glory and greatness, and the faithfulness with which their hearts are filled, and the upsurge of sympathy for human beings that they are bestowed, is such an extraordinary matter that it is difficult for others to imagine. It needs to be remembered, however, that all these persons are not equal in rank and that some are at a high level of the natural superiorities, and others are at a lower level and still others at a level which is even lower.

The pure conscience of a reasonable person can easily understand that the question of intercession is not something fake or artificial. On the contrary, there are built-in precedents thereof in the Divine scheme of things. The law of nature, too, bears witness to it. The philosophy of intercession can be understood as following. The root word for intercession in Arabic (*shuf'a*) means a pair. So intercession (*shafā'at*) indicates that a necessary quality of an intercessor is that he should be related to both sides. On one side, his soul should have a strong relationship with God Almighty as if through perfect union he formed a pair and a connecting link with the Divine, and on the other, he should also be closely attached to mankind as if he were part of their limbs. In short, for intercession to take place, both these elements are neces-

sary.

That is why Divine Wisdom created Adam in such manner that from the very beginning he established these two relationships in his nature. One relationship was established with God as is said in the Holy Qur'ān:

فَإِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِي فَقَعُوا لَهُ سَاجِدِينَ¹³²

When I have perfected him (Adam) and have breathed into him My spirit, do ye all angels fall down in prostration at once.

This shows that with the creation of Adam God established a relationship with him by breathing into him of His spirit. This was done so that man should have a natural relationship with God. In the same way, it was necessary that Adam should have a natural relationship with mankind; as they would be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, they would partake of the spirit which was breathed into Adam and thus Adam would naturally be their intercessor. It is necessary that a person who has descended from him should partake in the righteousness which has been bestowed upon Adam by the breathing into him of the spirit, as is obvious that the young of an animal partake of the qualities and actions of their father. This is also the essence of intercession that a natural heir should partake of the qualities of his ancestor. As we have explained, the root word for intercessor in Arabic derives from pair, which also means consort. Thus, a person who is by nature the consort of another will partake of the qualities of the latter.

This is the basis of the inheritance of qualities. A man's child partakes of human qualities and the foal of a horse

¹³² Al-Hijr, 15:30 [Publisher]

partakes of the qualities of a horse. In other words, this inheritance is deriving benefit from intercession. As the essence of intercession is the relationship of consorts, a person who desires to benefit from the intercession of another must have a natural relationship with that person so that he should be given whatever has been bestowed upon the nature of the other. This relationship subsists in human nature as a gift that one person is part of another, and it can also be promoted by acquisition. When a person desires that there should be an increase in the natural love and sympathy that he has for mankind such increase can be achieved in proportion to the circle of his nature. In the same way, love surges up in the heart of one person for another and increases to such a degree that the lover can find no comfort without the company of the beloved, and in the end the intensity of his love affects the heart of the other person also. He who loves another to the extreme is the one who wishes him well sincerely and in a perfect manner.

Thus, love is at the root of intercession when it is accompanied by a natural relationship, for without a natural relationship the perfection of love, which is a condition of intercession, is not possible. In order to invest human nature with this relationship, God Almighty did not create Eve separately from Adam, but created her from Adam's rib as is said in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا¹³³

Which means that from Adam We created His mate Eve. God created Eve as Adam's mate from Adam so that Adam's relationship to her and her progeny should be

¹³³ Al-Nisā', 4:2 [Publisher]

natural and not artificial. This was done so that the relationship and sympathy between the children of Adam should be lasting, inasmuch as natural relationship is lasting and non-natural relationship is not lasting for it lacks the attraction which characterizes natural relationship. Thus, God created naturally both kinds of relationship which Adam should have had, with God and with mankind.

It is thus obvious that the perfect man, who is capable of being an intercessor, must be one who partakes perfectly of both these relationships, and without this man cannot be perfect. After Adam also, the way of God was that both these relationships were considered necessary for a person who was to be an intercessor, that is to say, one relationship was that the heavenly spirit was breathed into him and God established such a relationship with him as if He descended upon him, and the second relationship was that of the consortship of mankind which was strengthened between Adam and Eve and mutual love and sympathy which shone forth between them more brightly than between others. It was because of this that these people were attracted to their wives. And this is the most apparent sign that they possess the spirit of sympathy for mankind. This is indicated by the *Ḥadīth*:

خيركم خيركم لاهله

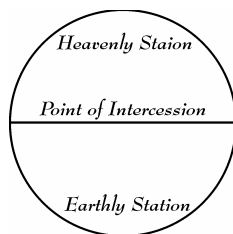
That is to say, the person who is most kind to mankind can only be the one who is kind to his wife. For he who treats his wife harshly cannot possibly behave beneficently towards others, inasmuch as God having created Adam, made his wife the first object of his love. Therefore, he who does not love his wife or has no wife to love, cannot attain to the status of a perfect man and

lacks one of the conditions of intercession. Even if he is sinless, he is not capable of intercession. He who marries a woman lays the foundation for himself of sympathy with mankind, for a wife becomes the means of establishing a wide circle of relationships and, when children are born, this circle is widened even more. The children in turn find wives and thus their children too come to have grandmothers and uncles of their own. In this way, such a person becomes habituated towards love and sympathy and the circle of this habit being extended, his sympathy is extended towards everyone. But those who are reared in celibacy, find no opportunity of extending this habit and their hearts are left dry and hard.

Sinlessness has nothing to do with intercession, because *Ismat*—sinlessness—only means negation or avoidance of sin. The definition of sin is that a person should earn punishment by deliberately breaking the commandments of God. It is thus clear that sinlessness and intercession are not interrelated for minor children and congenital idiots are also sinless for they are not capable of wilful disobedience. Nor do they earn punishment in the estimation of God on account of any action of theirs. They are entitled to be considered sinless, but are they entitled to be intercessors for mankind and to be called saviours?...

As I have just explained, it is necessary for an intercessor that he should have a deep relationship with God, as if God has descended into his heart and his humanness having died he has become the subject of heavenly manifestations, and his soul has melted and flowed like water towards God and has arrived at the extreme point of nearness to Him. It is also necessary for an intercessor that his heart should be overpowered with sympathy for

the one for whom he desires to intercede, and the intensity of his agony should make him feel as if his limbs are separating themselves from his body and his senses are all scattered. His sympathy should carry him to a stage which exceeds that of father and mother and every sharer in sorrow. When these two conditions are created in a person, he is united on the one side with the heavenly station and on the other with the earthly station. Then both sides of the scale are in balance, that is to say, there is a perfect manifestation of the heavenly and also a perfect manifestation of the earthly and he is thus suspended midway between the two.



Referring to the Holy Prophet's station of intercession, the Holy Qur'ān affirms his status as the perfect man by saying:

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى ۝ فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ ۝¹³⁴

This means that: The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] ascended towards God and approached as near to Him as was possible and acquired all the perfections of nearness and partook fully of the heavenly station, and then leaned perfectly towards the earthly station and arrived at the extreme point of service and worship and partook fully of the pure essentials of humanness, namely love and sympathy for mankind,

¹³⁴ Al-Najm, 53:9-10 [Publisher]

denoting earthly perfection. Thus, he arrived at the point of perfection on the one side in the love of God and, on the other, in the love of mankind. As he approached God fully and then approached mankind fully it became the case of one chord between two bows and thus fulfilled the condition for intercession. Indeed, in His Word, God bore witness for him that he occupied a place between God and mankind like a common chord between two bows.

At another place, describing his nearness to God, the Holy Qur'ān says:

قُلْ إِن صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ¹³⁵

That is to say: The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was commanded to inform people that he had become completely freed from himself and that all his worship was wholly for God....

This verse indicates that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had become so devoted to and lost in God that every breath of his life and even his death had become wholly God's, and that his ego and the creation and means had no part in his being, and that his soul was prostrated so sincerely at the threshold of God that nothing else had the slightest share in it....

As the love of God, and arriving at a high station in nearness to Him, is a matter of which other people cannot be aware, God Almighty made manifest such of the actions of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as show that he had adopted God in preference to everything else, and that every particle of his was so saturated with the love and greatness of God that his be-

¹³⁵ Al-An'ām, 6:163 [Publisher]

ing was like a mirror for the full observation of Divine manifestations. The effects of the perfect love of God, which can possibly be imagined, were all displayed in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Review of Religions—Urdu, Vol. I, pp. 175-184]

Holy Prophet^{SA}'s Nearness to God Almighty

God does not create another god like Himself, because His attribute of Unity and of being Peerless, which is eternal, prevents Him from doing so....

But He does create a sample of His Peerless Being by investing one of His creation, as a reflection, with His attributes which in reality belong to Him alone. There is an indication of this in the Holy Qur'ān in the verse:

وَرَفَعَهُ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ¹³⁶

Here by the possessor of high ranks is meant our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] upon whom were bestowed the highest ranks which are the reflection of Divine attributes and he became a mirror reflecting God, thus manifesting in a perfect degree, the vicegerence of God for the perfection of which not only mankind but the whole universe was created. This is a very fine point and our opponents, who are unaware of these fine points, and are not acquainted with these Divine mysteries, will wonder how out of millions of human beings only one person could achieve the rank of perfect vicegerence of God, which is the reflection of Godhead.

¹³⁶ 'Some of them He exalted by degrees of rank.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:254 [Publisher]

This is not the place to enter into a detailed exposition of this matter, but we consider it necessary to point out, in order to make it clear to a seeker after truth, that it is Divine law which is in accord with His attribute of Unity that, Himself being One, in His manifestations of His attribute of creation, He pays regard to Unity. If we reflect deeply over what He has created, we would find that the whole of creation is so adjusted that it is like a straight line, one end of which is raised high and the other end of which is sunk low.... On the last point of the highest part is a man, who in his human capacity is above the whole of mankind, and at the lowest end would be the soul possessing a defective capacity which due to this extreme loss is close to senseless animals.

If we look at the planetary system, we find this phenomenon further supported. God Almighty has perfected His creation by starting with the smallest particle and carrying it to the largest body, the sun. In this planetary system, God has doubtless created in the sun so grand, beneficial, and blessed a body that there is no other body which is its equal at the highest end. Thus observing the highest and the lowest ends of this system, which are always present before our eyes, we can understand that the spiritual system which has also proceeded from Him, is arranged in the same manner. It also has the same high and low points. The works of God Almighty are similar and balanced. He is One and in the manifestation of His works, He loves Unity. Discord and confusion have no place in them. So dear and appropriate is His method that all His works follow a system and are adjusted to each other.

Finding a proof in every direction and having observed

ourselves, we accept His law that all His works, spiritual as well as material, are not divergent and confused, but follow a wise system and are part of an arrangement which, beginning with the lowest, proceeds to the highest and that this uniform method is loved by Him. Accepting this, we have to confess that as in the material system, beginning with a particle, God has carried His creation up to the great body, the sun, which combines in itself visible perfection, than which no material body is greater. In the same way, there must be a spiritual sun, that is situated at the highest point of the spiritual elevation.

Now the question is, who is the perfect man described as 'the spiritual sun' and what is his name. It is not a matter which could be settled by simple reason. Because, except for God Almighty, none else possesses this distinction, and for the matter of that, who can carry out by the exercise of reason alone this tremendous task, that keeping in mind millions of God Almighty's creatures and comparing their spiritual powers and faculties, he should single out and identify the greatest of all. Without doubt, rationally speaking, no one can make such a claim. True, for investigating such lofty and equally profound phenomena, revealed scriptures do constitute one means to achieving it, in which God Almighty, prior to the coming of the Holy Prophet^{SA}, indeed thousands of years before him, described fully the address and identity of the perfect man.

The person whose heart is guided by Allāh and who believes in revelation and reflects on the prophecies that are mentioned in the Bible, will be bound to confess that the perfect man who is the spiritual sun, by whom the high-

est point has been filled, and who is the last brick of the wall of Prophethood, is Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].... The point of the highest exaltation of that good personified, who is situated at the highest point of the spiritual line, that is to say, Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which had been determined for him by Divine decree, has been exhibited palpably in the world of manifestation. As God has said with reference to the high dignity of this great Prophet:

وَرَفَعَهُ بَعْضُهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ¹³⁷

By this exaltation in rank is meant the highest point of the spiritual line which has been bestowed upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] overtly and covertly. This benign being, who is good personified, is higher and more perfect than the three types of God's favourites and is called the perfect manifestation of God-head.

The three types of nearness to the Divine are illustrated by three resemblances; by pondering on these the reality of the three grades of nearness can be appreciated. The first type of nearness is illustrated by its resemblance to the relationship between servant and master as God has said:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ¹³⁸

This means that the believers, who in other words can be called obedient servants, love their Lord above everything else.

¹³⁷ 'Some of them He exalted by degrees of rank.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:254 [Publisher]

¹³⁸ Al-Baqarah, 2:166 [Publisher]

Just as a sincere and faithful servant, by witnessing the continuous beneficence and many bounties and the personal qualities of his master, advances in his love and sincerity so much so that he acquires a similar temperament and follows the same way as that of his master, on account of the personal love born in his heart. Thus he desires fulfilment of his master's wishes quite like the master himself. The same is the attitude of the faithful servant towards God Almighty. He too, progressing in his sincerity and fidelity, arrives at a stage where he ceases to be himself, and assumes the colour of his Noble Master....

The second type of nearness to God resembles the nearness between father and son as God Almighty says:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ وَأَوَّشَةً ذِكْرًا¹³⁹

This means: Remember Allāh the Glorious with such spontaneous love and fervour, as you remember your fathers.

It should be remembered that a master begins to resemble a father when love for him becomes extremely intense and love which is purified of all selfishness settles in the heart as if it were part of it. Then all the eagerness of love and the strong attachment to the beloved is felt as natural and so appropriate to one's nature and so much a part of it that it does not seem to have originated in any effort. As a son on thinking of his father feels spiritual relationship with him, in the same way a believer feels this relationship; and as a son displays the features of his father and resembles him in his ways and manners, the same is the case with the believer....

¹³⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:201 [Publisher]

The third type of nearness resembles a person's own reflection. As a person views his own reflection in a large clear mirror and beholds the whole of his form together with all his features reflected in the mirror; in the same way, in this third type of nearness all Divine attributes become reflected clearly in his being and this reflection is more complete and perfect than the resemblances which have been mentioned before. It is obvious that a person beholding his own reflection in a mirror finds it in exact accord with himself. That degree of resemblance cannot be acquired by anyone else through any device, nor can it be found in a son. This degree of nearness is achieved by one who is placed so equally between the two chords of Divinity and servitude, is so related to both as if he has become the very same and by removing his own self from between, serves like a mirror. That mirror being faced in two directions obtains the impress of the Divine by reflection from one direction and from the other direction it conveys all grace according to the capacity of different temperaments to those who are adjusted to it. This is indicated in the Word of God:

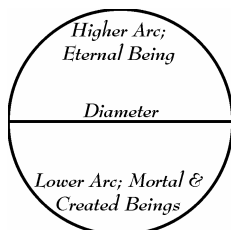
ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى ۝ فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ ۝¹⁴⁰

This means: He then came close (to Allāh Almighty), and then descended (to communicate the divine injunctions to humanity). In ascending high he arrived at the extreme point of nearness to God and between him and God there was left no veil, and then he descended towards mankind and between him and mankind there was no veil left. As he was complete and perfect in his ascent and descent, his place becomes that of a chord between

¹⁴⁰ Al-Najm, 53:9-10 [Publisher]

two bows. He approached close to the chord of Divinity and that of servitude, or even closer than can be imagined.

The two bows can be illustrated as under:



The line that divides a circle equally is a chord between two bows. This chord lies between the Benefactor and the beneficiary. At its extreme perfection, which is the ultimate point of all perfections, it resembles the centre of the circle which is the middle point of the chord. **This point is the heart of the perfect man and is equally related to the bow of Divinity on one side, and to that of servitude on the other.** This is the highest point of the lines that might be drawn from the centre to the circle. Although there are many other points in the chord between the two bows, yet with the exception of the point of the centre, other Prophets and Messengers and righteous persons can share in those points. The central point represents the perfection which the master of the chord possesses in a high and special and distinctive manner in which no other person can be a sharer with him in the true sense, but by following and obedience one can become a sharer by way of reflection.

The name of this central point is the reality of Muḥammad, which is the source of all verities in the world. In truth, the line of the chord has expanded from this central point and its spirituality is charged in the whole of the

chord, the holy grace of which has been bestowed upon the whole chord. The first and highest manifestation of the world which the Şufîs describe as the names of Allāh, is this central point which in the idiom of men of God is called the personal point of Aḥmad Muġtabā and Muḥammad Muşṭafā and in the idiom of the philosophers, it is named primary reason. This point has the same relationship to the other points of the chord which the Grand Name of God has to the other names of God.

In short, the mirror that reflects the perfect man, and the fountainhead of all hidden verities, and the key to all certainties is this very point which is the ultimate cause of all the mysteries of the beginning and the end and the reason for the creation of the low and the high. To visualise it is beyond the power of all reason and understanding. As all life receives grace from the life of God Almighty, and all beings have come into existence through His Being, and all determination is the result of His determination, in the same way, the point of Muḥammad, by the command of God, affects all ranks and degrees according to their various capacities and temperaments.

As this point combines, and indeed sums up all Divine ranks (by way of reflection) and all dimensions of the universe (as source and reality), it epitomizes, therefore, all stages of the universe, namely, souls and intellects – in whole or in part – and all physical stages to the end of their limits. In the same way, being the reflection of Divinity, it resembles Divine ranks as a reflection in the mirror resembles the original; and the basic Divine attributes, that is to say, life, knowledge, will, power, hearing, sight and speech with all their branches, are re-

flected in it in a complete and perfect manner. The central point which is suspended between God and His creation, that is to say, the personal point of our lord Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] cannot be confined merely to the word of Allāh as the title of Jesus has been so confined, inasmuch as, this Muḥammadi point combines in itself as a reflection all the Divine ranks. That is why Jesus has been likened to a son on account of the deficiency from which he suffered; for the reality of Jesus is not a complete manifestation of Divine attributes, but is only one branch out of its many branches. As a contrast, the reality of Muḥammad is a complete and perfect manifestation of all Divine attributes. For this reason, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has been likened in heavenly Books to a reflection of God, the Glorious. His station is one of the father rather than that of the son. The imperfect nature of the teaching of Jesus and the perfection of Qur'ānic teaching, as compared with all other revealed teachings, is also due to this, for incomplete grace is bestowed upon the incomplete and perfect grace is bestowed upon the perfect.

Of the resemblances to God on the part of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, is the verse:

ثُمَّ دَنَا فَتَدَلَّى ۝ فَكَانَ قَابَ قَوْسَيْنِ أَوْ أَدْنَىٰ ۝¹⁴¹

That is to say: The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] on account of his nearness to God, is like the chord between two bows and even closer.

It is obvious that on the higher side of the chord is the

¹⁴¹ Al-Najm, 53:9-10 [Publisher]

bow of Divinity so that when the whole soul of Muḥammad, on account of its intense nearness and clearness, advanced from the chord and approached even closer to the ocean of Divinity, it fell into that limitless ocean and his particle of humanness was lost in that ocean. This advance was nothing new or recent, but had been determined in eternity and it was worthy of being described in heavenly Books and revealed writings as the perfect manifestation by way of reflection of Divinity and a mirror which reflected God Himself. Another verse of the Holy Qur'ān in which this resemblance has been clearly mentioned is:

إِنَّا الْكَلِمَاتُ نَبِيَّكَ يُعْذِرُكَ إِنَّمَا يَبْتَغِيكَ اللَّهُ يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ¹⁴²

Those who swear allegiance to thee swear allegiance to Allāh; Allāh's hand is above their hands.

People who swore allegiance to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] did so by putting their hands in his hand. In this verse, God Almighty metaphorically referred to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as Himself and described his hand as His Own hand. This expression has been used concerning the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] on account of his extreme closeness to God. This is indicated also in the verse:

مَا دَمَيْتَ إِذْ دَمَيْتَ وَلَئِنْ اللَّهُ رَمَى¹⁴³

And you did not throw when you threw, but it was Allāh Who threw.

The same indication is found in the verse:

¹⁴² Al-Fath, 48:11 [Publisher]

¹⁴³ Al-Anfāl, 8:18 [Publisher]

قُلْ يُعْبَادِيَ الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ
إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا¹⁴⁴

Say: O my servants who have committed excesses against your souls, (i.e., committed grave sins) despair not of the mercy of Allāh. Allāh will forgive all sins.

Now it is obvious that mankind are not the servants of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and indeed all Prophets and non-Prophets are the servants of God Almighty, but as the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was closest to God, this idiom was employed in his case. In the same way, God Almighty has bestowed names upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which are Divine attributes. The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was named Muḥammad, which means greatly praised. Great praise in reality belongs to God Almighty, but was bestowed upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] by way of reflection. In the same way, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has been named 'Light' in the Holy Qur'ān, which illumines the world, the Mercy which safeguards the universe against decline, and 'Compassionate' and 'Merciful,' which are the names of God. In many places in the Holy Qur'ān it has been indicated and also expressly mentioned that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is the perfect manifestation of the Divine and that his word is the word of God and his advent is the advent of God. In this context one of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān is:

¹⁴⁴ Al-Zumar, 39:54 [Publisher]

وَقُلْ جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَقَ الْبَاطِلُ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا¹⁴⁵

Announce: Truth has come and falsehood has disappeared, falsehood is bound to perish.

In this verse ‘Truth’ signifies God the Glorious, the Holy Qur’ān and the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and by falsehood are meant Satan and the satanic group and satanic teachings. Here God Almighty included the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in His own name and the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] became the advent of God Almighty, the majestic advent in consequence of which Satan with all his hosts ran away and his teachings were brought into contempt and his forces suffered a great defeat.

On account of this perfect resemblance the Holy Qur’ān mentions in Surah *Āl-e-‘Imrān* that God took a covenant from all the Prophets that it was incumbent upon them to believe in the greatness and majesty of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and to help in their propagation. For this reason, beginning with Adam right down to Jesus all Prophets and Messengers confessed the greatness and majesty of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Moses [peace be on him], by announcing that: God came from Sinai and arose from Seir and shone forth from Mount Pārān,¹⁴⁶ which clearly shows that the manifestation of Divine Majesty reached its climax at Pārān and the sun of righteousness shone in its full glory at Pārān. The Torah tells us that Pārān is a mountain of Mecca where Ismā‘īl, the ancestor of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Al-

¹⁴⁵ Banī Isrā’īl, 17:82 [Publisher]

¹⁴⁶ Deuteronomy 33:2 [Publisher]

lāh be on him] made his dwelling. This is confirmed by geographical maps. Even our opponents know that no Prophet has been raised in Mecca except the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Consider, therefore, how clearly has Moses borne witness that the sun of righteousness that would rise at Pārān would shed the fiercest rays and that the progress of the light of truth will arrive at its climax in his blessed person....

The purport of all this is that the grades of nearness to Allāh are three and that the third one which is the perfect manifestation of Divinity and is a mirror reflecting God, pertains admittedly to our lord and master Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] whose rays illumine thousands of hearts and are cleansing numberless bosoms of inner darknesses and are leading them to eternal light. It has been well said that:

Muḥammad of Arabia, King of both the worlds;
Whose threshold is safeguarded by the Holy Spirit.

I cannot call him God, but I do say;
To recognize him is to recognize God.

How fortunate is the person who accepts Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as his leader and the Holy Qur'ān as his guide. *O Allāh, bless our lord and master Muḥammad and his people and his companions all of them. All praise is due to Allāh Who has guided our hearts to His Own love and to the love of His Messenger and the love of His favourite servants.*

تا بر دلم نظر شد از مهر ماهِ مارا کردست سیم خالص قلبِ سیاهِ مارا
 لطفِ عیمِ دلبرِ هر دم مرا بخواند هر چند می زند این اغیار را و مارا
 در کونِ دستانم چون خاکِ کوشب و روز دیگر نشان چه باشد اقبال و جا و مارا 147

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 232-301, footnote]

The Holy Qur'ān has set this matter out in an excellent allegory, which we produce below and which is a fine piece of Qur'ānic exegesis and is of crucial importance for the final understanding of the present discussion.

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ مَثَلُ نُورِهِ كَمِشْكُوَةٍ فِيهَا مِصْبَاحٌ ۚ الْمَوْصِيَّاتُ فِي زُجَاجَةٍ ۚ
 الزُّجَاجَةُ كَأَنَّهَا كَوْكَبٌ دُرِّيٌّ يُوقَدُ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُبَارَكَةٍ زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ ۚ يَكَادُ زَيْتُهَا يُضِيءُ ۚ وَلَوْ لَمْ تَمْسَسْهُ نَارٌ ۚ نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ ۚ يَهْدِي اللَّهُ لِنُورِهِ مَن
 يَشَاءُ ۚ وَيَضْرِبُ اللَّهُ الْأَمْثَالَ لِلنَّاسِ ۚ وَاللَّهُ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ 148

(Part Number: 18)

This means that: Allāh is the light of heavens and the earth, that is to say, every light that is visible in the heights or in the depths, whether in souls or in bodies, whether personal or acquired, whether overt or covert, whether inner or external, is a bounty of His grace. This is an indication that the general grace of the Lord of the worlds encompasses everything and that nothing is without His grace. He is the source of all grace and the Cause of causes of all lights and the Fountainhead of all

¹⁴⁷ When our moon cast a glance of love at our heart,
 Our dark heart was transmuted into pure silver.

Every moment the all-encompassing grace of my Beloved continues to invite;

Although who are not of us continue to bar the way.

Day or night, I lie like dust in my Beloved's lane;

What other sign could there be of our good fortune and honour!

[Publisher]

¹⁴⁸ Al-Nūr, 24:36 [Publisher]

mercies. His Being is the support of the whole universe and is the refuge of all high and low. He brought everything out of the darkness of nothingness and bestowed upon it the robe of existence. There is no other being who exists in his own right and is eternal, or is not the recipient of His grace. The earth and heaven and mankind and animals and stones and trees and souls and bodies, all owe their existence to His grace.

This is general grace mentioned in the verse:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ¹⁴⁹

This grace encompasses everything like a circle. For being the beneficiary of this grace, there is no condition attached. As compared with this there is a special grace which has conditions attached and which is bestowed only upon those individuals who have the ability and capacity to receive it, that is to say, on the perfect individuals who are Prophets, the best and highest of whom is Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. As that grace is a fine verity, therefore, God Almighty, after mentioning the general grace, has described the special grace for the purpose of expounding the light of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in an allegory so that it should be easily understood.

The translation of the remaining part of the above verse is: That light is exemplified (by the perfect man, the Messenger) as if there were a lustrous niche (**by which is meant the breast of the Holy Prophet—peace and blessings of Allāh be on him**). In the niche, there is a lamp (**meaning Divine revelation**). The lamp is contained in a crystal

¹⁴⁹ Allāh is the light of the heavens and the earth Al-Nūr, 24:36, [Publisher]

globe as bright as a glittering star, **(meaning the pure and holy heart of the Holy Prophet—peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him)—which in its nature is free from all dirt and opaqueness, like a clear mirror and has no relationship except with God).** That mirror is as bright as a glittering star, which shines in heaven with great glory **(meaning that the heart of the Holy Prophet—peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him—is so clear and bright that its inner light is displayed on its outer surface flowing like water).** That lamp is lit with the oil of a blessed tree, (which is an olive tree). **(By this is meant the being of the Holy Prophet—peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him—which is a collection of diverse types of blessings and the grace of which is not confined to any place or age or direction, but is everlastingly flowing and will never be cut off).** The blessed tree is neither of the east nor of the west **(that is to say, the nature of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] suffers neither from excess nor from deficiency and has been created in the best mould).** The oil of the blessed tree by which the lamp of revelation is lit, means the fine bright reason of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] together with the natural high moral qualities which are nourished by the clear fountain of his perfect reason.

The meaning of the lamp of revelation being lit up by the high moral qualities of the Holy Prophet—peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him—is that the grace of revelation descended upon them and they were the cause of the descent of revelation. There is here also an indication that the grace of revelation was in accord with the nature of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] the explanation of which is that revelation descends in accord with the nature of the Prophet to whom it is vouchsafed. For instance, the temperament of

Moses [peace be on him] was compounded of glory and wrath; so in accord with it the Torah was revealed in the framework of a majestic law. Jesus had a temperament which was meek and gentle and so the Gospel teaches meekness and gentleness. The Holy Prophet was by temperament extremely firm and steadfast. He disliked to be unduly lenient, nor did he like to be wrathful on every occasion. Instead his was a sagacious temperament that paid due regard to the demands of the occasion. Therefore, the Holy Qur'ān was also revealed in an appropriate and moderate mould which combines severity and kindness, awe and compassion, and hardness and softness. In this verse, God Almighty has disclosed that the lamp of the revelation of the Qur'ān has been lit from the oil of a blessed tree which is neither of the east nor of the west, but is in accord with the moderate temperament of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which has neither the severity of the temperament of Moses, nor the softness of the temperament of Jesus but is a compound of hardness and softness and of wrath and compassion and displays perfect moderation and is a combination of majesty and beauty. The high moral qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] are referred to in another place in the Holy Qur'ān in the words:

۱۵۰ اِنَّكَ لَعَلَّ خُلِقْتَ مِنْ شَجَرَةٍ مُّبَارَكَةٍ

(Part Number: 29)

(O Prophet!) You have been created blessed with high moral qualities.

This means that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was created with such perfection of

¹⁵⁰ Al-Qalam, 68:5 [Publisher]

high moral qualities as could not be exceeded. The word ‘*azīm*, which has been used in the verse, signifies in Arabic idiom, the highest perfection of the species. For instance, when it is said that a tree is ‘*azīm*, it means that it possesses all the length and breadth which it is possible for a tree to possess. Some lexicologists have said that ‘*azīm* signifies greatness which is beyond human ken. By the word *Khulq*, when used in the Holy Qur’ān, and also in other books of wisdom, is meant not merely good behaviour and kindness and gentleness. *Khalq* and *Khulq* are two distinct words which are used in juxtaposition to each other. *Khalq* means the physical body which God bestows on man whereby man is distinguishable from other animals. *Khulq* means the inner qualities by virtue of which the reality of humanness is distinguishable from the reality of animals. Thus, all the inner qualities which distinguish a man from animals are comprised in *Khulq*. As the tree of human nature is based on moderation and is free from excess or deficiency, which is found in the faculties of animals. Almighty Allāh points to this by saying:

لَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ فِي أَحْسَنِ تَقْوِيمٍ¹⁵¹

(Part Number: 30)

The word *Khulq*, when it is not accompanied by any pejorative qualification, always means high moral qualities. These high moral qualities comprise all the inner qualities which are found in man as clear reason, quick understanding, good memory, good remembrance, chastity, modesty, steadfastness, contentment, piety, high resolve, perseverance, justice, trust, generosity in its

¹⁵¹ ‘We have created man in the best of creative plans.’—
Al-Ṭīn, 95:5 [Publisher]

proper place, sacrifice in its proper place, benevolence in its proper place, beneficence in its proper place, bravery in its proper place, gentleness in its proper place, forbearance in its proper place, indignation in its proper place, courtesy in its proper place, respect in its proper place, compassion in its proper place, kindness in its proper place, mercy in its proper place, fear in its proper place, love in its proper place, love for God and withdrawal towards God, etc.

The oil would well-nigh glow forth even though no fire were to touch it (that is to say, the reason and all the high qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him] were so perfect and appropriate and delicate and bright, that they were ready to be lit up even before the receipt of revelation). **Light upon light**; that is to say, that many lights were combined in the blessed being of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and on those lights descended the heavenly light of Divine revelation and thereby the being of the *Khātam-ul-Anbiya* [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] became a combination of lights.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 191-195, footnote 11]

Spiritual Ascent of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

The *Me'rāj* (spiritual ascent) of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was his complete withdrawal from the world, and its purpose was to disclose the heavenly station of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Every soul has a point in heaven beyond which it cannot proceed. The point of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was the '*Arsh*'. The Companion on high also connotes

God. Thus, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was honoured above everyone else.

[*Malfūzāt*, Vol. 2, p. 136]

The journey of the *Me'rāj* was not with the physical body, but was a vision of the highest type, which in effect was experienced in complete wakefulness. In such a vision, a person according to the capacity of his soul, can journey through the heavens with a body of light. As the soul of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] possessed the highest capacity, therefore, in his journey of *Me'rāj*, he arrived at the highest point of the universe, which is described as the Great Throne. This journey was the vision in a sort of wakefulness. I do not call it a dream, nor was it a vision of low status. This was a vision at the highest stage, which is clearer and brighter than wakefulness. I myself have experience of this type of vision.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, Vol. 3, p. 126, footnote]

Meaning and High Station of the Seal of Prophethood

The perfect man to whom the Holy Qur'ān was revealed, was not limited in his vision, nor was there any deficiency in his sympathy in the sharing of sorrows. Both from the point of view of the time and of the place, his soul was charged with perfect sympathy. He was, therefore, bestowed a full share of the manifestations of nature and he was made *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'*, which did not mean that no one would from then on receive any spiritual grace from him, rather that he possessed the seal of Prophethood and that without the attestation of that seal, no grace can reach anyone, and that for his people, the

door of converse with the Divine would never be closed. Beside him, there is no Prophet who possesses the seal of Prophethood. It is only by the testimony of his seal that a Prophethood can be bestowed for which it is a condition that the recipient must be a follower of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. His high courage and sympathy did not wish to leave his people in a condition of deficiency and were not reconciled to the door of revelation, which is at the root of all understanding, being closed. Yet, in order to preserve the sign of the closing of Prophethood, he desired that the grace of revelation should be bestowed through obedience to him and that this door should be closed to anyone who was not his follower. God appointed him *Khātam-ul-Anbiyā'* in this sense.

Thus it was established till the Day of Judgement, that a person who does not prove being his follower through true obedience and who does not devote his full being to obeying him, cannot become the recipient of perfect revelation. Direct Prophethood has been ended with the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]; but Prophethood by way of reflection, which means the receipt of revelation through the grace of Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] will continue till the Day of Judgement, so that the door of perfection of mankind should not be closed and this sign should not disappear from the world that the high resolve of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] desired that the doors of converse with the Divine should remain open till the Judgement Day and the understanding of the Divine, which is the basis of salvation, should not disappear.

I affirm it with full confidence that the excellences of Prophethood attained their climax in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. The person who sets up a movement in opposition to him and puts forward some verity outside his Prophethood and withdraws from the fountain of Prophethood is false and an impostor. I say it plainly that a person who believes in anyone as a Prophet after the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and breaks the seal of his Prophethood, is accursed. That is why no Prophet can arise after the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who has not with him the seal of the Muḥammadī Prophethood.

The Muslims who are opposed to us are involved in the error that they believe in the coming of an Israeli Prophet, who would break the seal of Prophethood. I say that it is a manifestation of the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and of his everlasting Prophethood that 1,300 years after him, the Promised Messiah has appeared under his training and instructions with the same seal of Prophethood. If this doctrine is *kufṛ*, I hold this *kufṛ* dear. But those whose reason has been darkened and who have not been bestowed any share in the light of Prophethood cannot understand this and hold it as *kufṛ*; whereas, this is a matter which proves the perfection of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and his everlasting life.

[Al-Ḥakam, 10 June 1905, p. 2]

There is no need to follow the Prophethoods and Books which passed before the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as Muḥammadī Prophethood comprises all

of them, and beside it all ways are closed and all verities are included in it. No new verity will arrive after it as there was no verity before it which is not included in it. Therefore, all Prophethood ends with this Prophethood; and so it should have been, for everything that has a beginning, has also an end, but the Muḥammadī Prophethood is not deficient in beneficence. It is more beneficent than all other Prophethood. Following this Prophethood, one reaches God in a very easy manner, and by following it one is bestowed the bounty of Divine love and Divine converse more than was possible before.

Its perfect follower cannot be called simply a Prophet for this would be an insult to the perfect Muḥammadī Prophethood. He can be called a follower of the Holy Prophet and a Prophet, both together, for in this there is no insult of the perfect Muḥammadī Prophethood, but its grace shines forth even to a greater degree.

[Al-Waṣīyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, p. 311]

We affirm that the person who moves away in the slightest degree from the law of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is a *kāfir*. When anyone who turns away from following the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is a *kāfir* in our estimation, then what about one who should claim to bring a new law, or should make a change in the Holy Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] or should abrogate any commandment?

In our estimation only that person is a believer who truly follows the Holy Qur'ān, and believes it to be the last revealed Book, and accepts the law that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] brought into the

world, as everlasting, and makes not the slightest change in it, and loses himself wholly in following it, and devotes every particle of his being to its cause, and does not oppose it intellectually or by his conduct. It is then that he would be a true Muslim.

[Al-Hakam, 6 May 1908, p. 5]

***Istighfār* of the Holy Prophet^{SA}**

Most Christians, on account of their ignorance of the reality of *Maghfirat*—forgiveness—imagine that a person who seeks *Maghfirat*, is disobedient and sinful. A deep reflection over the meaning of *Maghfirat* makes it clear that it is the one who does not seek *Maghfirat* of God Almighty who is disobedient and vile. As every true purity is bestowed by Him and He alone safeguards one against the storm of passion, it should be a preoccupation of His righteous servants to constantly seek *Maghfirat* from that True Guardian and Protector.

If we were to seek an illustration of *Maghfirat* in the physical world the best illustration would be that *Maghfirat* is a strong and unbreakable dam which is erected to hold back a flood. As all strength and all power belongs to God Almighty, and a man is weak in his soul as he is in his body, and seeks water from the Eternal Being all the time for the nurture of the tree of his being, and cannot keep alive without His grace, *Istighfār*, in its meaning that we have set out, becomes necessary and essential. As a tree puts forth its branches in all directions, as if it spreads its hands towards the surrounding spring of water, pleading for help that its greenness should not decline and that the time of its flowering and putting forth fruit should not be lost, the same is the case with

the righteous. To supplicate the Fountain of real life for the water of security to safeguard spiritual life, or to promote it, is described in the Holy Qur'ān as *Istighfār*.

Reflect on the Holy Qur'ān and read it with care and you will alight upon the reality of *Istighfār*. The dictionary meaning of *Maghfīrat* is a covering which is designed to safeguard against a misfortune. For instance, water is an element that covers up the defects of trees and is thus *Maghfīrat*. Consider what would be the condition of a garden which receives no water for a year or two. Is it not true that its beauty will be destroyed and there will be no sign left of its greenness? It will produce no fruit and no flowers. Its inside will be burnt up. Its green and soft leaves will dry up and fall down; and dryness overcoming it, all its limbs will fall away from it like the limbs of a leper. Why will all these calamities overtake it? Because the water upon which its life depended was not available. This is referred to in the verse:

كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ¹⁵²

A good word is like a good tree.

As a good and noble tree cannot flourish without water, in the same way, the good word of a righteous person cannot flourish till a pure spring refreshes its roots by flowing in the stream of *Istighfār*. Thus the **spiritual life** of a person depends upon *Istighfār* through the stream of which the true spring reaches the root of humanness and safeguards it from drying up and dying.

The **religion** which does not set forth this **philosophy** is certainly not from God, and a person who claims to be a

¹⁵² Ibrāhīm, 14:25 [Publisher]

Prophet or a Messenger or righteous or pure-natured and turns away from this spring is certainly not from God. Such a one derives not from God Almighty, but from **Satan**, the root meaning of which is death. He who does not desire to draw that **true spring** to himself and does not fill this spring to its brim from the stream of *Istighfār*, in order to make his spiritual garden flourish, is a Satan, that is to say, he will die for it is not possible that the tree should flourish without water. Every **arrogant** one, who does not desire to make his spiritual tree flourish from this spring of life is a Satan and will be ruined like Satan. There has been no righteous Prophet in the world who turned away from the reality of *Istighfār* and did not desire to flourish through this real spring. It is true that our lord and master Muḥammad, **the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] supplicated more than anyone else for this flourishing and therefore God caused him to flourish and be fragrant more than all other Prophets.

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān No. 1, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 9 pp. 356-358]

Majesty and Humility of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

In the two blessed names of the Holy Prophet, Muḥammad^{SA} and Aḥmad^{SA}, there are two separate excellences. Muḥammad^{SA}, which means greatly praised, signifies majesty and greatness and carries the flavour of being a beloved one, for a beloved one is praised. It is necessary, therefore, that it should signify majesty. But Aḥmad^{SA} has the flavour of a lover for it is a lover's part to praise and he praises the beloved. As Muḥammad^{SA} signifies majesty and greatness, Aḥmad^{SA} signifies humility.

His life as a Prophet was divided into two parts; one

spent in Mecca which extended over thirteen years and the other spent in Medina extending over ten years. His **Meccan life illustrated his name** Aḥmad. During that period his time was spent **weeping before God, in seeking His help** and in supplication. He who is fully informed of his Meccan life knows that no lover could ever equal the tears the Holy Prophet^{sa} shed and the supplications he made during that period in search of his Beloved, nor can any lover ever do so in future.

His weeping was not for himself but was on account of his awareness of the condition of the world. The worship of God had disappeared and God Almighty, having put faith in his soul, had inspired him with a joy and delight. He naturally desired to communicate this delight and love to the world, but when he observed the condition of the world and the capacities and natures of the people, he was confronted with great difficulties. He wept over this condition of the world so much that he put his life in danger. This is indicated in the verse:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ¹⁵³

This was his life of supplication and was the **manifestation of his name** Aḥmad. At that time he was concentrating in a grand manner and the concentration manifested its effect in his life in Medina at the time when the significance of his **name** Muḥammad was revealed, as is indicated in the verse:

وَأَسْتَفْتَحُوا وَخَابَ كُلُّ جَبَّارٍ عَنِيدٍ¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ 'Haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death because they believe not.'—Al-Shu'arā', 26:4 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁴ 'They prayed for victory, and as a result thereof every haughty enemy of truth came to naught.'—Ibrāhīm, 14:16 [Publisher]

[Malfūzāt, Vol. II, pp. 178-179]

He who is familiar with the mode of expression of the Holy Qur'ān knows that sometimes the Noble and Merciful One uses an expression for His special servants which is apparently derogatory, but which in its context signifies great praise. As God Almighty said with regard to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]:

وَوَجَدَكَ ضَالًّا فَهَدَىٰ¹⁵⁵

Did He not find thee *Dāll* and showed thee the right way.

It is quite clear that the well-known and familiar meaning of the term *Dāll*, of which lexicologists are too fond, is 'misguided'. Thus the verse would mean that God found you misguided and guided you; whereas, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was never misguided, and a Muslim who believes that at any time in his life the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was misguided, is a faithless *kāfir* and guilty of violating the *Sharī'ah*. The verse should be understood by reflecting upon the context in which it is placed, which is that Allāh the Exalted first stated about the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]:

الَّذِي يَجِدُكَ يَتِيمًا فَآوَىٰ ۖ وَوَجَدَكَ عَائِلًا فَأَغْنَىٰ¹⁵⁶

Allāh the Exalted found thee an orphan and helpless, and He gave thee shelter by Himself and found thee *Dāll* (in love with Himself) and drew thee towards Him and found thee indigent and enriched thee.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 170-171]

¹⁵⁵ Al-Ḍuḥā, 93:8 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁶ Al-Ḍuḥā, 93:7-9 [Publisher]

Holy Prophet^{SA}—the Grand Reformer

Holy Prophet^{SA} Brought Morals to Perfection

In meekness and gentleness, Moses stood higher than all the Prophets in Israel and no other Prophet in Israel, whether Jesus or anyone else, approached the lofty station of Moses. The Torah bears witness that in meekness and gentleness and in moral qualities Moses was higher than all the Prophets in Israel. The third verse of the twelfth chapter of Numbers says that Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.

God has in the Torah praised the meekness of Moses as He has not praised any other Prophet in Israel. It is true, however, that the high moral qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān are thousands of times more exalted than those of Moses. God has said that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] combined in his person all the high moral qualities which were found in the different Prophets and said with regard to him:

إِنَّكَ لَعَلَّ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ¹⁵⁷

Thou dost possess the highest moral qualities.

The word '*azīm*' in Arabic idiom is used as connoting the highest quality of a thing. For instance, when a big tree is called '*azīm*', it would mean that it possesses all the height and width and bulk that is possible for a tree to possess. Thus, this verse means that all the high moral qualities and excellent characteristics which a human being can

¹⁵⁷ Al-Qalam, 68:5 [Publisher]

possess, were all present in the fullest degree in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Thus, this is the highest possible praise. This is also indicated in another verse:

وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيمًا¹⁵⁸

Meaning that: God has bestowed His grace upon thee in the largest measure and no Prophet can be equal in rank with thee.

This praise is mentioned in Psalm as a prophecy concerning the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as is said: Therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. (Psalms, Ch. 45)¹⁵⁹

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 605-606, sub-footnote 3]

Holy Prophet^{SA}'s Superiority over All the Prophets

The Holy Qur'ān shows that every Prophet was a follower of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as is said:

لَتُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ وَكَتَنُصُرْتَهُ¹⁶⁰

In this way, all Prophets became followers of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, p. 300]

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] combines the names of all the Prophets in himself inasmuch as he possessed all their diverse excellences. So he is Moses and Jesus and Adam and Abraham and

¹⁵⁸ Al-Nisā', 4:114 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁹ Psalms 45:7 [Publisher]

¹⁶⁰ 'You shall believe in him and help him.'—Āl-e-ʿImrān, 3:82 [Publisher]

Joseph and Jacob. This is indicated in the verse:

فِيهِدُهُمْ أَتَمَّةً ١٦١

Meaning that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] should combine in himself all the diverse guidance which other Prophets had brought.

This shows that the dignity of all Prophets was combined in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]; and his name Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] also points to this, for it means greatly praised, and great praise can only be imagined when all the varied excellences and special qualities of the different Prophets are combined in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. There are many verses in the Holy Qur'ān which set forth clearly that the being of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] on account of its qualities and excellences, was a combination of all the Prophets. Every Prophet finding in him an appropriate relationship with himself imagined that he would come under his name.

At one place the Holy Qur'ān sets forth that this Prophet has the closest relationship with Abraham¹⁶². In a *Ḥadīth* of *Bukhārī*, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] says that he has a close relationship with Jesus and that his being is combined with the being of Jesus. This confirms the saying of Jesus that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] would appear under his name and so it happened that when our Messiah [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] appeared, he completed the incomplete works of the

¹⁶¹ Al-An'ām, 6:91 [Publisher]

¹⁶² Āl-e-Imrān, 3:69 [Publisher]

Messiah of Nazareth and bore witness to his truth and cleared him of the calumnies which the Jews and the Christians had uttered against him, and thus gave pleasure to the soul of Jesus.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, p. 343]

Divine revelation is a mirror in which the perfect attributes of God Almighty are seen, according to the inner cleanliness of the Prophet who is the recipient of the revelation. As the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was higher than all the other Prophets in the purity of his soul, the expansion of his mind, his chastity, modesty, sincerity, trust, fidelity and love of the Divine, God, the Glorious, anointed him with the perfume of special excellence in excess of any other Prophet. His bosom and heart which were broader and holier and more innocent and brighter and more loving than the bosom and heart of any who had passed before him, and who were to come after him, were considered worthy that such Divine revelation should descend upon him as should be stronger and more perfect, higher and more complete, than the revelation vouchsafed to all those who were before him and all those who were to come after him, and which should serve as a clear, wide and large mirror for reflecting Divine attributes. That is why the Holy Qur'ān possesses such high excellences that the brightness of all previous books is cast into the shade before its fierce and brilliant rays. No mind can put forth a verity which is not already contained in it and no reason can present any argument which is not already presented in it. No speech can affect the hearts so powerfully as the strong and full of blessings effect it produces upon millions of hearts. Undoubtedly it is a clear mirror reflecting the perfect attributes of the Divine in which all

is found that is needed by a seeker to arrive at the highest grades of understanding.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 71-72, footnote]

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was the best of the Prophets and had a higher status than all the Messengers, and God desired that as by his personal qualities he was the Chief of all the Prophets, so from the point of view of his overt services also, he might be proclaimed to the world as better and higher than all. Therefore, God Almighty extended his beneficence to the whole of mankind, so that his efforts and his endeavours might be generally manifested and should not be confined to a particular people, as was the case with Moses and Jesus, and so that enduring severe persecution from every direction and every people, he should be entitled to the great reward which will not be bestowed upon other Prophets.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 653-654]

It is my belief that if, leaving the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] aside, all the Prophets who had preceded him had combined to perform the task and to carry out the reform which the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] performed and carried out, they would not have been able to do so. They had not the heart and the strength which had been bestowed upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. If anyone should say that this shows disrespect towards the other Prophets, he would be guilty of uttering a calumny against me. It is part of my faith to honour and respect the Prophets, but **the Holy Prophet's superiority to all other Prophets is the principal part of my faith** and my whole being is saturated with it. It is not

within my power to exclude it.

Let my unfortunate opponent, who is sightless, say what he pleases, but our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] performed a task, which all the others combined together, or separately, could not have performed.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ¹⁶³

[Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 174]

The holy books of the Jews state clearly that a saviour like Moses will be sent for them. This means that he would appear at a time when the Jews would be passing through a state of suffering and humiliation as was imposed upon them in the time of Pharaoh. Then they would be delivered from torment and disgrace by believing in him. There is no doubt that our lord and master Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was the personage for whom the Jews had been waiting throughout the ages and in whom the prophecy of the Torah was most clearly fulfilled. When the Jews believed in him many great kings were raised among them. This is clear proof that God Almighty forgave their sins because of their accepting Islām and had mercy on them as was promised in the Torah.

[Ayyām-uṣ-Ṣulāḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, pp. 302-303]

The greatness that was bestowed upon Jesus was on account of his following the Holy Prophet Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] for Jesus was informed of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and believed in him and attained salva-

¹⁶³ 'That is Allāh's grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases.'—Al-Jumu'ah, 62:5 [Publisher]

tion through his belief.

[Al-Hakam, 30 June 1901, p. 3]

Now we **compare Jesus** with the **Holy Prophet** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in the matter of the treatment accorded to them by the governments of their respective days and how their prestige and Divine support were manifested. When we do this, it becomes clear that **in contrast with the Holy Prophet** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] **Jesus not only fails to exhibit signs of Godhead, he even fails to demonstrate the signs of a Prophet.** When the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] sent his message to the rulers of his time, the Roman Caesar, on receipt of the Holy Prophet's message, breathed a sigh that he was caught among the Christians and that if he had been free, **it would have been a matter of pride for him to present himself to the Holy Prophet** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] **and to wash his feet like a slave.** But a wicked and evil-hearted ruler, the **Chosros** of Iran, was affronted and sent soldiers to arrest the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. They arrived in Medina towards the evening and told the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that they had been sent to arrest him. The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] disregarded what they had said and invited them to accept **Islām**. At that time the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was in the mosque accompanied only by three or four companions, but the royal emissaries **were trembling in awe** of him. In the end they asked what answer should they take back concerning his arrest to their lord. **The Holy Prophet** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] asked them to wait till the next day. The following

morning when they came, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] said to them: **He whom you call lord and god, is no god. God is the Being Who is not subject to death or destruction. Your god was killed last night. My True God set up his son Sherweh over him and last night he was killed by the hand of his son. This is my reply.**

This was a great miracle witnessing which thousands of people of that country believed in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] because in fact **Khusro Pervez, the Chosros**, had been killed that night. This is not a statement like the vague statements of the Gospel, but is supported by historical evidence. Mr. Dav-enport has also mentioned this event in his book.

As against this, the lack of esteem in which **Jesus** was held by the rulers of his time is well known. Probably the Gospels still contain the record of **Herodius** sending **Jesus** to Pilate as an accused person. He remained for a time in **custody** and his **godhead did not come into play**. No monarch said that it would be a matter of pride for him to serve Jesus and to wash his feet. Pilate handed him over to the Jews. Was this his godhead? What a contrast is there between the two persons who encountered similar circumstances, but with opposite results. In one case, a proud and arrogant monarch was incited by Satan to order the arrest of the claimant to Prophethood, but he was overtaken by the Divine curse and was murdered with great humiliation at the hands of his own son. In the second case, a person whom—regardless of his real claims—his extravagant followers raised to the heavens, was in fact arrested and sent into **custody** of the cruel police as an accused person from one town to another.

Miracles of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

A time was when the Evangelists proclaimed through the streets and lanes most impertinently and falsely that no prophecy had been made and no miracle had been shown by the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Now is a time when God Almighty in addition to the thousands of miracles of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and in the *Aḥādīth*, has shown hundreds of signs which no opponent has been able to counter. We have throughout proclaimed gently and meekly to every Christian and other opponent, and we still proclaim, that it is necessary for every religion which claims to be true and from God Almighty, that it should produce men who, as the deputies of their leader, guide and Messenger, should prove that that Prophet is living by virtue of his spiritual blessings and has not died.

It is necessary that the Prophet, who is followed and is believed in as an intercessor and saviour, should be ever-living through his spiritual blessings. He should be so obviously seated on the throne of honour and exaltation and glory that his shining face and his sitting on the right hand of the Eternal and Ever-Living, All-Sustaining and All-Powerful God should be established by powerful Divine lights. Loving him perfectly and obeying him perfectly should necessarily produce the results that his follower should be bestowed the bounty of the Holy Spirit and heavenly blessings, and obtaining light from the lights of his beloved Prophet he should dispel the darkness of his age and should furnish eager people with that firm and perfect and shining faith in the existence of

God which burns up all desire of sin and all the passions of a low life. This is the proof that that Prophet is living and is in heaven.

So how shall we express our gratitude to our Holy and Glorious God that He bestowed upon us the strength to love and obey His beloved Prophet Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and then by bestowing upon us a full share of the spiritual grace of that love and obedience, which is true piety and a true heavenly sign, proved to us that our dear and exalted Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has not died, but is sitting on the right hand of his Powerful King on the Throne of Exaltation and Glory in the highest heaven. *O Allāh, send down Thy blessings, bounties and peace upon him.*

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا¹⁶⁴

Now let someone tell us who is proved to possess such spiritual life beside our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Does Moses possess it? Certainly not. Does David possess it? Certainly not. Does Jesus possess it? Certainly not. Does Rājā Rām Chandrā or Rājā Krishnā possess it? Certainly not. Do those Rishīs possess it concerning whom it is said that the Vedās were revealed to their hearts? Certainly not. It is useless to mention physical life, because the real and spiritually beneficent life is the one which, resembling the life of God Almighty, sends down light and certainty.

¹⁶⁴ ‘Allāh and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! You also should invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutations of peace.’—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:57 [Publisher]

To attain long physical life is no matter of pride. Some of the Egyptian monuments are thousands of years old, and the ruins of Babylon are still in existence which are the home of owls, and in this country Ajūdhiya and Bindraban are all old cities and many old monuments are found in Italy and Greece. Through their long continued existence, do all these monuments partake of the glory and exaltation which is bestowed on the holy ones of God on account of their spiritual life?

It is clear that the proof of such spiritual life is found only in the case of our blessed Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. May God's mercies in their thousands keep him company.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 15, pp. 137-139]

More than three thousand miracles were shown by our lord and master, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and his prophecies were numberless; but it is not necessary for us to put forward those miracles which were shown in the past. One grand miracle of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is that the revelation vouchsafed to all other Prophets has been cut off, and their miracles have been left behind, and their followers are empty-handed and are left only with old stories; but the revelation vouchsafed to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has not been cut off, nor have his miracles been cut off, but are always displayed through his perfect followers who are honoured with obeying him. On this account the religion of Islām is a living religion and its God is a Living God. In this age also **this servant of the Lord of Honour is present**. Thousands of signs in support of the Messenger of Allāh and the Book of Allāh have been shown by

me, and I am almost daily honoured with the converse of God Almighty.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 350-351]

When a person arrives at this exalted stage of meeting with God, he sometimes performs acts which **appear to be beyond human power** and have the colour of Divine Power. For instance, during the battle of Badr, **the Holy Prophet** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] threw a handful of gravel at the opposing force not accompanied by any prayer, but **with his own spiritual power**, which affected the opposing force in such an extraordinary manner that everyone's eyes were struck by the gravel and they were rendered sightless and began to run around in confusion and helplessness. This miracle is referred to in the verse:

وَمَا زَمَيْتَ إِذْ زَمَيْتَ وَلَئِنَّ اللَّهَ زَمَى¹⁶⁵

When you threw the handful of pebbles, it was not you who did throw, but it was Allāh Who threw;

meaning that it was Divine Power that was working behind the scene and it did that which was not within human power.

In the same way, another **miracle** of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which was the **splitting of the moon**, was displayed by Divine Power. It was not accompanied by any prayer as it happened merely by his pointing at the moon with his finger **which was filled with Divine power**. There are many other miracles which the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] worked purely with his power and which were not accompanied by any prayer. On many

¹⁶⁵ Al-Anfāl, 8:18 [Publisher]

occasions, he multiplied water so much by dipping his fingers into a cup of water that the whole host and their camels and horses drank of it and yet the original quantity of the water was not diminished. On many occasions, by putting his hand upon three or four loaves of bread, he satisfied the hunger of thousands. On some occasions, he blessed a small quantity of milk with his lips and a company of people drank from it and were filled. On some occasions, by adding his saliva into a well of brackish water, he rendered it sweet. On some occasions, he healed severely wounded people of their injuries by placing his hands upon them. On some occasions, he replaced the eyeballs of people which had fallen out in consequence of some injury received in battle and healed them with the blessings of his hand. In this way, he did many other things by his personal power behind which worked **Divine Power**.

If the **Brahmūs** and the **philosophers** and the **followers of nature** of today refuse to accept these miracles, they are to be excused for they cannot recognize the station at which a human being is endowed with Divine power by way of reflection. If they laugh at these things they are also to be excused for they have not progressed beyond their childish condition and have not reached any degree of **spiritual maturity**. Their condition is far from perfect and they are happy that they should die in that **imperfect** condition.

But one pities the **Christians**, who having heard of some similar, but of a lower degree of, events in the life of Jesus, put them forward as an argument in support of the divinity of Jesus and allege that the reviving of the dead by Jesus and the healing of paralytics and lepers by him

was by his own power and not by any prayer, and that this is proof that he was truly the son of God and even God himself. It is a pity that they are unaware that if a human being could become God by performing such exploits then our lord and master, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was much more entitled to such divinity for he performed mightier miracles than were displayed by Jesus. Not only did the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] work these extraordinary miracles himself, but left a legacy of a long series of them among his followers till the Day of Judgement, which has been in evidence always in all ages and will continue to be in evidence till the end of the world. The impress of **Divine power** which has been experienced by **holy souls among the Muslims** is difficult to match from among other people. Then what folly is it to believe in someone as God or as the son of God, on account of these extraordinary events. If a man can become God by performing such exploits, there would be no end to the number of gods!

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 65-67]

We wish to point out that the miracle of the splitting of the moon is not an event that the Muslims put forth as proof of the truth of Islām and as a principal argument in support of the truth of the Holy Qur'ān. Out of thousands of internal and external miracles and signs, this was also a natural sign which is supported by historical proof. If overlooking clear proofs we are to suppose that this miracle has not been established, and if we are to interpret the relevant verse of the Holy Qur'ān as the Christians or the followers of nature, or those who repudiate external events interpret it it would do no harm to Islām. The truth is that the Word of God has wholly

relieved the Muslims of the need of relying upon other miracles. It is not only a miracle in itself, but on account of its blessings and lights, it produces miracles.

The **Holy Qur'ān** comprises in itself such perfect qualities that it is in no need of extraordinary miracles. The presence of external miracles adds nothing to it and their absence would disclose no defect in it. The beauty of the Qur'ān is not decked out with the ornaments of external miracles. It comprises in itself thousands of strange and wonderful miracles which can be witnessed by the people of every age. It is not necessary to refer only to the past. The Qur'ān is such a beautiful beloved that everything derives ornamentation from it and it is not dependent upon anything else for its own ornamentation.

ہمہ خوبان عالم را بزبور ہا بیارائید تو سببیں تن چناں خوبی کہ زبور ہا بیارائی¹⁶⁶

Those who doubt the miracle of the splitting of the moon have only one objection to make, and that too a false one, that the splitting of the moon is contrary to the law of nature. The naturalists contend that by exercising his reason, man can find out nothing but nature and its laws. That is to say, the observation of the universe indicates that everything material and non-material by which we are surrounded is part of a wonderful system for its existence and continuance and for its effect. This system is inherent in everything and never departs from anything. Whatever nature has designed will happen without fail in the same way.

We accept all that, but does it prove that Divine laws are

¹⁶⁶ Ornaments adorn all the beauties in the world;
But you are so beautiful that you beautify the ornaments themselves.
[Publisher]

limited only to our present observation and experience and that there is nothing more left? To believe that Divine Power is unlimited is of the essence of the Divine system; it ensures that the door of intellectual progress should always remain open. What a mistake it is to put forward the proposition that whatever is beyond our understanding or observation is outside the law of nature! Once we admit that the laws of nature are unending and unlimited, we cannot in principle reject anything new because it seems to be beyond our reason. We should assess the matter on its proof or lack of proof. If it is proved we should enter it in the list of the laws of nature, and if it is not proved we should confine ourselves to affirming that it is not proved. We would not be entitled to say that it is outside the law of nature. To hold anything as being beyond the law of nature, it is necessary that we should encompass all Divine laws which are eternal as within a circle and our intellect should fully comprehend all that God's Power has revealed from the beginning up to now and that He will reveal through Eternity

In any event, if we believe that the Powers of God Almighty are unlimited, then it would be madness to hope to encompass all His Powers. For if they can be confined within the measure of our observation, then how would they be unlimited and unending? In such case, we are not only confronted with the difficulty that our finite and incomplete experience should comprehend all the Powers of the Eternal God, but there would arise a much greater difficulty that by limiting His Powers He Himself would also be limited and we would be affirming that we have discovered all the reality of God Almighty and that we have arrived at its depth and bottom. Such an assumption

would be disrespectful and destructive of faith and would amount to a total denial of God.

[*Surmah Chashm Āryā Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, Vol. 2, pp. 60-65]

I enquire that if the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who had announced his claim that the moon had been split by the pointing of his finger and that the disbelievers had witnessed it with their own eyes, though they called it sorcery, was not true in his claim, then why did his opponents keep silent and why did they not call the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to account that he had not split the moon and that they had not called anything sorcery, nor refused to accept anything that had happened as an event? Why did they remain silent and keep their mouths shut till they had passed away from this world? Does not their silence, which was inconsistent with their opposition and with their eagerness to contend against and question everything, certify that they were held back from speaking by some severe obstruction? What could that obstruction be except that the event was true?

This miracle occurred in Mecca when the Muslims were very weak and helpless. It is a matter of surprise that the sons or grandsons of the opponents of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] also did not utter anything in contradiction of the event, for if the claim of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was mere falsehood and had received great publicity, they should have written and published books in exposing it. When the Muslims continued to bear witness to it openly before thousands of people, and their evidence is found recorded in the books of that time and hundreds of thousands of Christians, Arabs, Jews, and

Magians, etc. did not dare to contradict it, it is clear proof that the opponents had witnessed the splitting of the moon and that there was no room left for contradiction....

We would like to add that the event of the splitting of the moon is recorded in the reliable books of the Hindūs. Biyās Jī has recorded in the *Mahābhārtah* that in his time the moon had been split into two and had again come together. He attributed this, without any proof, to Biswāmtar as his miracle It seems that this event was well known among the Hindūs even at the time of the writing of the history of *Farishtah*, whose author has recorded in his eleventh discourse, on the authority of the Hindūs, that the Rājā of Dhārka, which was a town situated on river Phanbal in Mālwa and is perhaps now known as Dhārā Nagrī, was sitting on the roof of his palace and he saw that the moon had suddenly split into two and had then come together. On investigation the Rājā discovered that it was a miracle of the Arabian Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and he became a Muslim.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 122-127]

The miracles and signs that were bestowed by God Almighty on **our lord and master, the Holy Prophet** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were not confined to his time, but will continue till the **Day of Judgement**. In the past ages, no Prophet was included among the followers of another Prophet, though he helped the faith of the previous Prophet and believed in him, but the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has been bestowed this special honour that he is *Khātam-ul-Anbiyā'*; one, because he **achieved the climax of all the excellences of Prophethood**; and, secondly, because there will

be no Prophet after him who would bring a new law nor any Prophet who is not his follower. Everyone who is **honoured with converse with the Divine**, achieves it through his grace and through his mediation and is known as **his follower** and not as a direct Prophet. He has been accepted to such a degree that today a minimum of 200 million people of every rank are Muslims and stand before him as his servants. Great and powerful **kings** who conquered a portion of the world, fell at his **feet** like humble slaves. Even today, Muslim kings regard themselves as his humble servants and descend from their thrones at the mention of his name.

It is worthy of consideration whether this **glory**, this **splendour**, these **thousands of heavenly signs** and Divine blessings can be bestowed upon a false one. We take great pride in the fact that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to whom we have attached ourselves, was **bestowed great grace by God**. He is not God, but through him we have seen God. His religion which has come to us is a mirror of Divine Powers. Had it not been for Islām, it would have been difficult in this age to appreciate what Prophethood is and whether miracles are possible and whether they are part of the law of nature. This puzzle was resolved by the eternal grace of that Prophet and it is due to him that we are not mere story-tellers like other people, but enjoy the **support of God's light and His heavenly help**. We are unable to express adequately our gratitude that God Who is hidden from others, and the inner power which is beyond the concept of others, and the Lord of Glory, have been disclosed to us by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

Holy Prophet^{SA} Alone is the Living Prophet

The miracles that were performed by all the other Prophets came to an end with them; but the miracles of our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] are fresh and alive in every age. Those miracles being alive and not having succumbed to death is proof that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is alone the living Prophet and that true life is that which has been bestowed on him and not upon any other. His teaching is a living teaching because its fruits and blessings are experienced today as they were experienced 1,300 years before. We have before us no other teaching by acting on which a person might claim that he has been bestowed its fruits, blessings, and graces and that he has become a Sign of God. By the grace of God Almighty, we find the fruits and blessings of the Holy Qur'ān present among us, and we still find those graces and signs which are bestowed in consequence of true obedience to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

Thus has God Almighty established this Movement so that it should be a living witness to the truth of Islām, and should prove that those blessings and signs which had appeared 1,300 years ago have appeared in this age also through perfect obedience to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Hundreds of signs have so far been displayed. We have invited the leaders of all peoples and all religions that they should exhibit the signs of their truth in opposition to us, but there is not one of them who can put forth a practical sample of the truth of his religion.

The promises of success which God Almighty gave by the Glory of His Divinity in opposition to all opponents, all enemies, all deniers, all the wealthy, all powerful rulers, all philosophers, all followers of other religions, to that humble, weak, poor, unlearned, untrained one, and which were fulfilled at their time and continue to be fulfilled, could not be the work of any human being, nor can any honest seeker after truth have any doubt concerning them. That poor, lonely and humble person announced the spread of his faith and the establishment of his religion at a time when he had no one with him except a few indigent companions, and the total number of Muslims could be contained in one small room and their names could be counted on the fingers of two hands, and who could be destroyed by a few men of the town. They were opposed by the rulers of the earth and they had to deal with the peoples who were determined to destroy them and whose numbers ran into millions. But now look at the ends of the earth how God Almighty spread those few weak people all over the earth, and how He bestowed upon them power, wealth and kingdom, and how for thousands of years thrones and crowns were bestowed upon them. There was a time when their number did not exceed the number of the members of one family and today they are counted in hundreds of millions. God had said He would safeguard His word, and is it not true that the teaching which the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] conveyed as coming from God Almighty in His Word is still safeguarded in that Word and there have always been hundreds of thousands who have committed the Holy Qur'ān to memory. God had said that no one would be able to match His Book in wisdom and understanding, in beauty of composition, in

comprehending the knowledge of the Divine, and in setting forth religious arguments, and so it has proved.

If anyone questions this, let him come forth and produce its match, and let him produce from any other book the equal of the verities, fine points, and wonders which we have set forth in this book from the Holy Qur'ān with the promise of a reward of ten thousand rupees. So long as he fails to do so, he is convicted in the estimation of God. God had promised that He would take Syria out of the possession of the Christians and would bestow it upon the Muslims. So it came about, and the Muslims became the heirs of that land. All these claims are accompanied by Divine Power and Might. They are not merely like the boasts of astrologers that there would be earthquakes, famines, epidemics, plagues and the assaults of nation against nation, etc.

By following the Word of God and through its effect, those who obey the Holy Qur'ān, and believe sincerely in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and love him, and consider him better and holier and more perfect and more exalted than the whole of creation and all Prophets and all Messengers and all holy ones and all that has happened or might happen, continue to partake of those bounties and drink deliciously and copiously of the draught that was given to Moses and Jesus to drink. They are lit up with Israeli lights and enjoy the blessings of the Prophets who were descendants of Jacob. Holy is Allāh, repeat, Holy is Allāh!! how high is the status of the Seal of the Prophets^{SA} and how grand is the light the humblest of whose servants arrived at the ranks that we have mentioned. *O Allāh, send down Thy blessings on Thy Prophet and Thy loved one, the Chief of*

the Prophets, the best of Messengers and the Seal of the Prophets, Muḥammad, and his people and his companions and bestow Thy bounties and peace upon them.

The Christian divines, Pundits, Brahmūs, Āryās and other opponents of our time need not wonder where are the blessings and heavenly lights in respect of which the followers of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] are sharers with Moses and Jesus and where is the heritage of those lights which are bestowed on Muslims and from which all other people and followers of other religions are debarred? To set their doubts at rest, we have stated it several times in this footnote, that we are responsible for setting forth the proof of these things before any seeker after truth who would be ready, on witnessing the particular superiority of Islām, to become a Muslim.

In the second sub footnote¹⁶⁷, we have set out in brief, how God Almighty manifests His Divine powers and graces and blessings in the case of Muslims, and how He has promised and given good news of events that are beyond human power. So if any Christian divine, Pundit or Brahmū denies these things, on account of his inner darkness, or any Āryā, or a follower of other faiths, is truly and sincerely a seeker after God, it is incumbent upon him that like a true seeker, he should discard all pride, arrogance, hypocrisy, worship of the world, obstinacy and contention and, seeking only the truth and wishing only for it, should come straight to us like a poor and humble person and should then be patient, steadfast,

¹⁶⁷ The reference is to the second sub footnote in Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, which starts on page 293 in Ruhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1. [Translator]

obedient and sincere like the righteous so that by God's will he might arrive at his object. If even now anyone turns away he becomes witness to his own lack of faith.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 266-275, footnote 11]

Holy Prophet^{SA} and the Holy Word of God

The Holy Qur'ān emphatically affirms that it is the Word of God and that our lord and master, Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is His true Prophet and Messenger, on whom that Holy Word has descended. This claim is clearly set forth in the following verses:

(Āl-e-‘Imrān, 1, 2)

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّا لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اَنْتَ اَلْحَيُّ الْقَيُّوْمُ ۝ نَزَّلَ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ بِالْحَقِّ ¹⁶⁸

Allāh is He beside Whom there is none worthy of worship. All life and sustenance is from Him. He has sent down to thee this Book in accordance with truth and the requirements of truth.

Again:

يٰۤاَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ الرَّسُوْلُ بِالْحَقِّ ¹⁶⁹

(Part Number: 5, Sūrah Al-Nisā')

O mankind, the Messenger has indeed come to you with Truth and with the requirements of truth.

Again:

وَ بِالْحَقِّ اَنْزَلْنٰهُ وَ بِالْحَقِّ نَزَّلَ ¹⁷⁰

(Part Number: 15)

We have revealed this Discourse to you in accordance with the requirements of truth and with truth has it descended.

¹⁶⁸ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:2-4 [Publisher]

¹⁶⁹ Al-Nisā', 4:171 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁰ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:106 [Publisher]

Again:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ بُرْهَانٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَأَنْزَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ نُورًا مُبِينًا¹⁷¹

(Part Number: 6, Sūrah Al-Nisā')

O mankind, there has come to you a manifest proof from your Lord, and We have sent down to you a clear Light.

Again:

قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا¹⁷²

(Part Number: 9)

Proclaim to all people: I have been sent as a Messenger to you all.

Again:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ وَآمَنُوا بِمَا نُزِّلَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَهُوَ الْحَقُّ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ
كَفَرُ عَنْهُمْ سُبُطُورِهِمْ وَأَصْلَحَ بَالَهُمْ¹⁷³

(Part Number: 26)

Allāh will forgive their sins and improve their lot, who believe and perform good deeds and believe in this Book which has been revealed to Muḥammad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], and also believe that it alone is the truth.

There are hundreds of other verses in which the claim has been put forward clearly that the Holy Qur'ān is the Word of God and that **Muḥammad, the chosen one** [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is His true Prophet. But the verses that we have set out should suffice.

We would remind our opponents that this claim is not put forth in any other book as forcefully as it has been put forth in the Holy Qur'ān. We are very eager that the

¹⁷¹ Al-Nisā', 4:175 [Publisher]

¹⁷² Al-A'rāf, 7:159 [Publisher]

¹⁷³ Muḥammad, 47:3 [Publisher]

Āryās should show from the Vedās that the four Vedās claimed to be the word of God and set forth clearly that they were revealed to such and such a person at such and such a time. For a book, on behalf of which it is claimed that it is from God, it is a primary necessity that it should set forth this claim clearly. It would be an impertinence to attribute to God a book which gives no indication of its being from God.

A **second matter** which is worth mentioning is that not only has the Holy Qur'ān claimed that it is from God and that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is the Messenger of Allāh, but has also established this claim with **strong and powerful arguments**. We shall set forth all these arguments in their order, but for the moment we present the first argument so that seekers after truth should be able to compare in this respect other books with the Holy Qur'ān. We also invite every opponent that if this method of proof establishes the truth of a book and is found in their books also, they should set it forth in their papers and journals; otherwise, we would have to conclude that their books lack this proof of high degree. We affirm with full confidence that this method of proof will not be found in their religion and if we are in error, they should prove it.

Grand Revolution brought by the Holy Prophet^{SA}

That first argument which the Holy Qur'ān has set forth in support of its claim of being from God Almighty is that sane reason holds it to be a strong argument for accepting a true Book and a **true Messenger of God**, that they should appear at a time when the world should be plunged in darkness, and people should have adopted paganism in place of the Unity of God, vice in place of

purity, wrong in place of justice, and ignorance in place of knowledge, and a **Reformer should be sorely needed**. Then such a Messenger should depart from the world when he should have accomplished his work of reform in a fine manner and should have been **safeguarded from his enemies** while he was occupied in that work. Like servants, he should have appeared under command and should have departed under command. In short, he should appear at a time when the age should demand that a heavenly Reformer and Book are needed and he should be called back in accordance with a revealed prophecy after he had firmly planted the tree of reform and a **grand revolution** should have appeared.

We state it with great pride that the **brightness** with which this argument has been established in support of the Holy Qur'ān and our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is lacking in the case of other Prophets and other Books. The claim of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was that he had been sent to the **whole of mankind**; so the Holy Qur'ān convicts all people of being involved in all types of paganism and vice and disobedience as it says:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ¹⁷⁴

Corruption has appeared on land and sea;
and then says:

لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا¹⁷⁵

We have sent you so that you should warn all nations;
that is to say, that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] should warn all people that on account

¹⁷⁴ Al-Rūm, 30:42 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁵ Al-Furqān, 25:2 [Publisher]

of their misconduct and false doctrines, they have been accounted very sinful in the estimation of God Almighty.

The word Warner that has been used in this verse concerning all the peoples, which means to warn the sinners and evildoers, is a sure indication that the **Qur'ān** claimed that the whole world had been corrupted and that everyone had given up the way of truth and good behaviour, inasmuch as a warning is meant for the disobedient and pagans and evildoers, and a warning is administered to offenders and not to the well behaved. Everyone knows that it is only the vicious and faithless ones who are warned, that it is the way of Allāh that a Prophet is a bearer of good tidings for the good and is a Warner for the evil ones. When a Prophet is designated as a Warner for the whole world, it would have to be accepted that by the revelation vouchsafed to that Prophet, the whole world has been held to be involved in misconduct. This is a claim which the Torah did not make in the case of Moses, nor the Gospel in the case of **Jesus**, but was put forward only by the Holy Qur'ān. Then it was said:

كُنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ شَفَا حُفْرَةٍ مِّنَ النَّارِ ¹⁷⁶

Meaning that: Before the advent of this Prophet you had arrived at the brink of hell;

The Jews and the Christians were warned that they had **perverted** the Books of God and had led all the people in every type of mischief and misconduct, and the idol worshippers were charged with worshipping stones, men, stars, and the elements and that they had forgotten the True Creator and were guilty of devouring the property of orphans and of killing children and of doing wrong to

¹⁷⁶ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:104 [Publisher]

their partners, and that they had transgressed beyond measure in everything. It was said:

اعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا¹⁷⁷

That is to say: Beware that the whole earth had died and would now be revived afresh by God.

In short, the Holy Qur'ān charged the whole world with *Shirk*—paganism, misconduct and idol worship, which are the source of evils, and held the Christians and the Jews to be at the root of all evil and set out all the types of vices in which they indulged. The Qur'ān drew such a picture of the misconduct of the world that except in the case of the age of Noah, no other age appears to resemble it.

We have contented ourselves with citing only a few verses and would urge our readers to study the Holy Qur'ān carefully so as to discover how forcefully and with what effective words the Holy Qur'ān has set forth that the whole world had been corrupted and had died, and that mankind was standing on the brink of hell. It urged the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to warn the whole world that it was in a serious condition. A study of the Holy Qur'ān reveals that the world was steeped in paganism, idol worship, misconduct and all manner of sin, and was sunk in the deep well of vice.

It is true that the Gospel mentions some of the misconduct of the Jews, but it nowhere said that the whole world had been corrupted and had died and had become filled with paganism and misconduct. Nor did Jesus claim that he was a Messenger to the whole world. He addressed the Jews, who were a small people and inhab-

¹⁷⁷ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:18 [Publisher]

ited a few villages within sight of Jesus. But the Holy Qur'ān mentions the death of the whole world and describes the evil condition of all peoples. The Jews were the descendants of the Prophets and professed faith in the **Torah**, though they did not act in accordance with it; but at the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān, in addition to all sorts of corruption in conduct, their doctrine too had been corrupted. Thousands of people were **atheists** and thousands **denied** revelation and all sorts of evils were rife on the earth. Jesus mentioned the misconduct of the Jews who were a small people, which shows that the Jews were then in need of a Reformer. But the argument that we put forward in the case of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to affirm that he was commissioned by God, that he came at the time of general corruption and was called back after effecting a full reform, and the presentation of both these aspects in the Holy Qur'ān, and his calling the attention of the world to it, is a matter which is not to be found in the Gospel and indeed not in any other Book except in the Holy Qur'ān.

These arguments are put forth by the Holy Qur'ān itself and it claims that its truth is established by a consideration of both these aspects. It appeared at a time when misconduct and false doctrines had become widespread and the world had drifted far away from truth, reality, Unity of God and purity. The affirmation of the Qur'ān in this respect is confirmed by a study of comparative history. There is evidence of the confession of every people that that age was so full of darkness that every people had become prone to creature worship and that is the reason that when the Holy Qur'ān charged all people with misguidance and evil-doing, not one of them was

able to prove its innocence. Observe how forcefully God Almighty speaks of the vices of the people of the Book and describes the death of the whole world. He says:

وَلَا يَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلُ ظَالًا عَلَيْهِمْ الْأَمَدُ فَنَقَسَتْ
 قُلُوبُهُمْ وَكَثِيرٌ مِنْهُمْ فَاسِقُونَ ۝ اَعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ
 مَوْتِهَا قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ ۝¹⁷⁸

(Sūrah Al-Ḥadīd, Part Number: 27, Rukū` 18)

This means that: The believers should not behave like the people of the Book who were given the Book before them and a long time passed and their hearts were hardened and most of them became disobedient and vicious. Remember that the earth had died and that God is now reviving it. These are signs of the need and truth of the Holy Qur'ān which are being explained to you so that you might understand.

Now you will realize that we have not put forward this argument from our own mind, but that it is the Qur'ān that puts it forward and after setting forth both parts of the argument, it says that:

قَدْ بَيَّنَّا لَكُمُ الْآيَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَعْقِلُونَ¹⁷⁹

These are Signs in support of the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and the Holy Qur'ān which have been set forth so that you might reflect and arrive at the reality.

The second part of this argument is that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was called back from the world to his Lord at a time when he had completed his task fully and this is also clearly set forth in the

¹⁷⁸ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:17-18 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁹ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:18 [Publisher]

Holy Qur'ān, as Allāh the Glorious says that:

أَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتْمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيتُ لَكُمُ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا ¹⁸⁰

Meaning that: By the revelation of the Qur'ān and by the reform of the people, I have perfected your faith and have completed My favours upon you and have chosen Islām as your religion.

This was an indication that the revelation of the Qur'ān had been completed and it had carried out surprising and wonderful changes in eager hearts and had perfected their training and that Divine favour had been completed for the Muslims.

These are the two aspects which are the purpose of the advent of a Prophet. This verse announces forcefully that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] did not depart this life till Islām had been perfected by the revelation of the Qur'ān and the proper training of the Muslims. This is a sign of Divine origin which is not bestowed on a false claimant. Indeed before the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] **no true Prophet had shown** this high example of perfection that on the one side the Book of God should be completed in peace and on the other side the training of people should be perfected and the disbelieving people should be **defeated** in every direction and Islām should be **victorious** on every side.

At another place it is said:

إِذَا جَاءَ نَصْرُ اللَّهِ وَالْفَتْحُ ۖ وَرَأَيْتَ النَّاسَ يَدْخُلُونَ فِي دِينِ اللَّهِ أَفْوَاجًا ۝
فَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ وَاسْتَغْفِرْهُ ۚ إِنَّكَ كَانَ تَوَّابًا ¹⁸¹

¹⁸⁰ Al-Mā'idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

¹⁸¹ Al-Naṣr, 110:2-4 [Publisher]

This means that: The succour and victory that had been promised having come and you having seen, O Prophet, that people are entering into Islām in great hosts, then praise and glorify God, that is to say, confess that whatever has happened was not your doing but was the grace and beneficence of Allāh, and supplicate Allāh in final *Istighfār* for He is Oft-Returning with compassion.

When Prophets are urged to *Istighfār*, it is wrong to conclude that this means that they have to seek forgiveness like sinful people. In their case, it is a confession of their nothingness and humility and weakness and is a respectful way of seeking His help. As these verses affirm that the purpose of the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had been fulfilled, that is to say, thousands of people had accepted Islām and this was an indication of the approaching death of the Holy Prophet—he died within a year of the receipt of this revelation—it was natural that as these verses had given pleasure to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] he should also be concerned that the garden having been planted, what about its future irrigation? So God Almighty, in order to remove this concern of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] urged him to *Istighfār*.

The meaning of *maghfīrat* is so to cover up a person that he should be safeguarded against calamities. Thus, *mighfar* means a helmet. *Istighfār* means that the calamity that is feared or the sin that is apprehended, may be covered up and stopped from becoming manifest. In this case it was to convey reassurance to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that he should not grieve over the faith, that God Almighty would not let it

be destroyed and would ever turn to it in mercy and hold back the misfortunes which could follow upon some weakness.

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān, No. 1, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 9 pp. 333-356]

It is a clear proof of the **Prophethood** of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and of the truth of the Holy Qur'ān, that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was sent into the world when by its circumstances, it was demanding a grand **Reformer** and that he did not die, nor was he killed, till he had established the truth upon the earth. When he appeared as a Prophet, he at once **proved his need by the world** and condemned every people for their paganism, unrighteousness and wrong-doing. The Holy Qur'ān is full of such admonition, for instance:

تَبَارَكَ الَّذِي نَزَّلَ الْفُرْقَانَ عَلَى عَبْدِهِ لِيَكُونَ لِلْعَالَمِينَ نَذِيرًا¹⁸²

Blessed is He Who has sent down the Holy Qur'ān to His servant that he may be a Warner to all the peoples; that is to say, he was to warn them of their false doctrines and their going astray.

This verse is proof, and the Qur'ān claims, that the Holy Prophet^{SA} appeared at a time when the whole world and all the people had been corrupted; and his opponents have accepted this claim not only by their silence, but also by their confession. It follows that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had come at a time when a true and perfect Prophet should have appeared. Then when we consider the time at which he was called back, we find that the Qur'ān very explicit that he was called back when he had completed his task. He was called back after the verse was revealed that the code of

¹⁸² Al-Furqān, 25:2 [Publisher]

teaching for the Muslims had been perfected and all that had to be revealed in that context had been revealed. Not only this, but it was announced that the support of God Almighty had also been perfected and that people in large numbers had accepted Islām. It was also revealed that God had filled their hearts with faith and righteousness and had made them averse to disobedience and vice. They had acquired good morals and a great change had taken place in their morals, conduct and souls.

Then was revealed the *Sūrah Al-Naṣr*, the purport of which is that all the purposes of Prophethood had been fulfilled and Islām had achieved a victory over peoples' hearts. The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] announced that this *Sūrah* indicated the approach of his death. He then performed the Pilgrimage and called it the Farewell Pilgrimage, in which he delivered a long address from the back of a camel and called upon the people to bear witness that he had conveyed to them all the commandments which he had been commissioned to convey to them. Everyone confirmed in a loud voice that he had conveyed everything to them. The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] then pointed to heaven and said three times: Bear witness, O Allāh. He then said that he had admonished them at length as he might not be with them in the following year. He then returned to Medina and died the following year. *Send down on him Thy blessings and peace, O Allāh.* All these indications are given in the Qur'ān and are confirmed by the history of Islām.

Can any Christian, Jew or Āryā put forward the instance of any of their Reformers whose advent was at the time of great need, and whose departing was after the fulfilment

of that need, and whose opponents bore witness to their own unrighteousness and misconduct? I know that no one outside Islām can offer this proof. It is obvious that **Moses** was sent for the destruction of Pharaoh, and to rescue his people from his tyranny, and to guide them along the right path. He was not concerned with the corruption of the world. It is true that he rescued his people from the tyranny of Pharaoh, but could not rescue them from Satan, nor was he able to lead them into the Promised Land. The children of Israel were not able to purify themselves at his hands and repeatedly fell into disobedience, till Moses died while they were still in that condition.

So far as the disciples of Jesus are concerned, the Gospel bears witness to their condition; no further explanation is needed. Nor is it a matter unknown, as to how little Jesus was able to guide the Jews for whose guidance he had been sent as a Prophet. If the Prophethood of Jesus were to be judged by this measure, one would be compelled to affirm that it is in no way established by this standard.

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān, No. 1, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 9, pp. 358-369]

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was raised at a time when the whole world was involved in paganism, misguidance and creature worship and all peoples had abandoned true doctrines and forgetting the straight path, every group was following its own innovations. Idol worship was rife in Arabia, Persia was committed to fire worship, in India in addition to idol worship, creature worship of diverse types was widespread. Many books had been written, whereby scores of human beings had been deified, and the foundation of Avatār worship had been laid. According to Rev. Mr. Bourt and several English writers, no religion had been so corrupted as the Christian religion and it had fallen

into serious disrepute on account of the misconduct and wrong doctrines of its ministers of religion. In Christian doctrine not one or two persons, but several objects had been deified.

The advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] at this time of general misguidance, when the circumstances demanded an exalted Reformer and there was great need of Divine guidance, and his illumining a whole world with the Unity of God and righteous conduct and his putting an end to paganism and creature worship, which is the mother of all ills, are clear proof that he was a true Messenger of God and was superior to all Messengers. His truth is established by the fact that in that age of general misguidance, the law of nature and the way of God demanded a true Guide.

It is the eternal law of the Lord of the worlds that when some type of suffering reaches its climax in the world, Divine mercy addresses itself to its removal. When through a prolonged drought people are faced with extinction through famine, God, the Compassionate, sends down rain. When hundreds and thousands of people begin to die of an epidemic, the air is cleansed by some means or some remedy becomes available. When a people is caught in the wiles of a tyrant, a just and compassionate ruler appears. In the same way, when people forget the way of God and abandon His Unity and worship, God Almighty, having bestowed perfect insight upon a servant and having honoured him with His word, sends him for the guidance of mankind so that he should reform the corruption that had set in.

The truth of the matter is that Providence, Who sustains the world and supports its existence, does not hold back

or suspend any of His attributes of beneficence. Every one of His attributes manifests itself on its proper occasion. As it is established by sane reason, that to overcome every calamity, the relevant attribute of God Almighty manifests itself and it has been established by history, and by the confession of opponents, and by the clear affirmation of the Holy Qur'ān, that at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] this calamity was at its height, that all the peoples of the world had abandoned the straight path of the Unity of God and all sincerity, and of Divine worship, and it is known to everyone that it was the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] alone and no one else, who reformed that corruption and rescuing a world from the darkness of paganism and creature worship, established it on the Unity of God, then it follows inevitably that he was a true Guide from God Almighty. Almighty Allāh has set forth this argument in His Holy Book in the following verses:

تَاللّٰهِ لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ أُمَمٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ فَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ الشَّيْطٰنُ اَعْمٰلَهُمْ
فَهُمْ وَلِيَّيْهُمْ الْيَوْمَ وَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ ۝ وَّمَا اَنْزَلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتٰبَ اِلَّا
لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوْا فِيْهِ ۚ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ ۝ وَاللّٰهُ
اَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَآءِ مَآءً فَآخَبَ بِهِ الْاَرْضَۙ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَاۙ اِنَّ فِيْ ذٰلِكَ لَاٰيَةً
لِّقَوْمٍ يَّسْمَعُوْنَ ۝

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¹⁸³ 'Allāh, Who is the Fountainhead of grace, guidance and providence bears witness: We did send Messengers to the tribes and nations before thee; but they were corrupted because of the misguidance of Satan; so the same Satan is their partner this day. This Book has been revealed so that it may settle their differences and the truth may be declared manifestly. The fact is that the whole earth had died; Allāh sent down water from heaven and brought this dead to life. This is a sign of the truthfulness of the Book, but it will benefit only those who would listen, i.e., are seekers after truth.'—Al-Naḥl,

(Surah, Al-Nahl, Part Number: 14)

We call attention to the fact that the three elements that we had mentioned which lead to the conclusion that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a true guide, are mentioned in an excellent manner in these verses. First the hearts of the misguided ones, who had been caught in error over centuries are likened to a dry and dead land, and the Divine word is described as the rain which comes from heaven, and an indication is given of the eternal law that in case of drought Divine mercy always rescues mankind from destruction. It is indicated that this law of nature is not confined to material water, but that spiritual water also certainly descends at a time of hardship, that is to say, when misguidance becomes general. In such circumstances, Divine mercy comes into play for certain to overcome the calamity that affects the hearts.

Then these verses point to the second element that the whole earth had been corrupted before the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and finally a reference is made to the fact that those spiritually dead had been revived through this Holy Word of God. The conclusion is that this is a sign of the truth of this Book and seekers after truth are invited to conclude that the Holy Qur'ān is the Book of God.

As this argument establishes the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] it also establishes his superiority over the other Prophets, inasmuch as the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh

be on him] had to contend against the whole world and the task that was committed to him was in truth the work of a thousand or two thousand Prophets.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 112-116, footnote 10]

The time of the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] needed a grand Divine Reformer and heavenly guide, and the teaching that he set forth was true and was greatly needed and comprised everything that fulfilled the needs of the time. That teaching was so effective that it pulled hundreds of thousands of hearts to the truth and impressed on hundreds of thousands of minds that:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁸⁴

He fulfilled the ultimate purpose of Prophethood, that is to say, teaching the principles of salvation so perfectly that no other Prophet was able to fulfil it to such perfection in any age. These facts compel one to bear eager witness that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a true guide from God.

There is no remedy for a person who denies out of bigotry and obstinacy. Such a person could even deny the existence of God, otherwise all these signs of righteousness and truth which are combined so perfectly in the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] cannot be established in the case of any other Prophet. Let him who dares come forward to show them to us.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 112-114]

Our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a **great Reformer** for the proclamation of truth,

¹⁸⁴ There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh. [Publisher]

and restored to the world the truth that had been lost. No Prophet shares with him the pride that he found the whole world in darkness and by his appearance that darkness was converted into light. He did not die till the people among whom he had appeared had cast aside the garment of paganism and had put on the robe of the Unity of God. Not only this, but also they achieved high grades of faith and performed such works of righteousness, fidelity and certainty which are not matched in any part of the world. Such success was not achieved by any Prophet other than the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

It is a strong argument in support of the truth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that he was raised in an age when the world had fallen into deep darkness and called for a grand Reformer. He departed the world at a time when hundreds of thousands of people had abandoned paganism and idol worship and had adopted the Unity of God and the straight path. Such perfect reform was particular to him that he taught a people who were at the level of animals, the ways of humanity. In other words, he converted wild beasts into men, and then turned them into educated men, and then made them men of God, and breathed spirituality into them and created a relationship between them and the True God. They were slaughtered like sheep in the cause of God and were trodden under foot like ants, but they did not abandon their faith, and marched forward in the face of every calamity.

Doubtless, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a second Adam and indeed was the true Adam for the establishment of spirituality through

whom all human excellences arrived at their perfection, and all good faculties were devoted to their proper task and no branch of human nature was left barren. Prophethood ended with him not only because he was the last Prophet in point of time, but also because all the excellences of Prophethood reached their climax in him. As he was a perfect manifestation of Divine attributes, his law had the qualities of both majesty and beauty. That is why he was named both Muḥammad and Aḥmad [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. And there was no miserliness in his Prophethood; Indeed, it was destined for the benefit of the whole world since the beginning of time.

[Lecture Siālkot, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 206-207]

Steadfastness of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

That Prophet is superior to all other Prophets who is the great Instructor of the world, that is to say, he at whose hands the great corruption of the world was reformed and who re-established on the earth the Unity of God which had been lost and had disappeared. He overcame all false religions by proof and argument and removed the doubts of every misguided one. He provided the true means of salvation by teaching the right principles for which it was not necessary to crucify an innocent person, or to remove God from His true and eternal station and to put Him in the womb of a woman. Thus, his beneficence and his grace exceed those of everyone else and his rank is higher than all. History points out, and the heavenly Book is a witness, and those who have eyes are able to observe, that the Prophet who is thus established as superior to all other Prophets is Muḥammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, p. 97, footnote 6]

It is worthy of note how steadfastly the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] adhered to his claim of Prophethood right till the end, despite thousands of dangers and hundreds of thousands of opponents and obstructers and threateners. For years, he endured misfortunes and hardships which increased daily and rendered success apparently hopeless, and by enduring which patiently he had not in mind the achievement of any worldly purpose. On the contrary, by putting forward his claim of Prophethood, he lost what he had and purchased a hundred thousand contentions and invited a thousand calamities to overtake him. He was expelled from his home, was pursued by slayers, lost his home and all it contained and was poisoned several times. Those who were his well-wishers began to wish him ill and those who were his friends turned into enemies. For a long period, he had to bear hardships, to be steadfast under which was not possible for a cunning impostor.

When after a long time Islām became supreme, the Holy Prophet collected no wealth for himself, nor did he raise any structure, nor did he seek any means of comfort or luxury, nor did he derive any personal benefit from anything. Whatever came to hand was spent in taking care of the poor, the orphans, the widows and those burdened with debt. He never ate his fill. He was so straightforward that by his plain speaking and his preaching of the Unity of God, he made enemies of all the peoples of the world who were sunk in paganism. He converted his own people into enemies first of all, by forbidding them idol worship. He upset the Jews for he stopped them from indulging in diverse types of creature worship and exalta-

tion of their divines and from misconduct. He stopped them from denying and insulting Jesus which caused them great heart burning, and they became his bitter enemies, and began to cast about for means of destroying him. In the same way, he annoyed the Christians for he denied the godhead of Jesus and his being the son of God, and denied his being the crucified saviour. The fire worshippers and the star worshippers were also annoyed with him for they were also forbidden to worship their deities. The Unity of God was proclaimed as the sole means of attaining salvation. Were these the ways of winning the world?

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 108-109]

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was straightforward and was ready to lay down his life for God, and turned wholly away from any hope or fear of people, and put his trust wholly in God, and being devoted to the will and pleasure of God, he cared not what calamities he would have to endure through preaching the Unity of God and what hardships might be inflicted upon him by the pagans. He endured every hardship and carried out the commandments of his Lord, and fulfilled all the conditions called for by his preaching and admonition, and attached no importance to any threat that was held out to him. I say truly that of all the Prophets there was none who put his full trust in God on all occasions of danger and went on preaching against paganism and creature worship despite all his enemies and was so steadfast and persevering as the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 111-112]

The calamities and hardships that the Holy Prophet

[peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had to endure during the thirteen years of his Meccan life cannot be imagined. My heart trembles when I think of them. They demonstrate his high resolve, his generosity, his perseverance and his steadfastness. What a mountain of steadfastness he was that no difficulty could shake him in the least. He did not slacken for a moment in the discharge of his duty, nor was he sorrowful. No difficulty could weaken his resolve. Some people out of misunderstanding enquire: why did he have to encounter all these misfortunes and difficulties when he was the loved one of God and His chosen one? I would say to them that water is not discovered till one digs in the earth and splits it through several feet. It is only then that agreeable water is found which is the basis of life. In the same way, delight in the cause of God Almighty can be procured only by steadfastness and firmness under difficulties and misfortunes. How can those who are unaware of this spiritual experience can ever taste and feel the delight of facing hardship? How on earth can they imagine that whenever the Holy Prophet^{SA} faced trouble, a spring of felicity and delight welled up in his heart, reinforcing his faith in God and in His love and succour.

[Malfūzāt, Vol. II, p. 307-308]

Divine Support for the Holy Prophet^{SA}

Is it not a matter for wonder that a poor, powerless, helpless, and unlearned orphan who was alone at a time when every people possessed a plenitude of financial, military and intellectual means, brought such a bright teaching that he silenced everyone with his conclusive arguments and clear proofs? He pointed out the mistakes of those who were claimed as great philosophers. He exhibited

such power that he pulled down rulers from their thrones and put poor people on them in their place. If this was not Divine support, then what was it? Can anyone overcome the whole world in reason, knowledge, strength and force without Divine support?

Who was with the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] when he first announced to the people that he was a Prophet? Did he possess the treasury of any king relying on which he took on the whole world as his opponents, or had he at his disposal a force relying on which he had become secure against the attacks of kings? Our opponents know that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was at that time alone and helpless and without any means. It was only God, Who had created him for a great purpose, Who was with him and was his sure support.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 119-120]

On five occasions, the life of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was in serious danger and had he not been a true Prophet of God, he would certainly have been destroyed. One was the occasion when the disbelieving Quraish had surrounded his house and had sworn that they would kill him that night. The second occasion was when pursuers had arrived with a large body of men at the entrance to the cave in which he had taken shelter along with Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^{RA}. The third occasion was when he had been left alone in the battle of Uḥad and the Quraish had surrounded him and attacked him in a body but were foiled of their purpose. The fourth occasion was when a Jewish woman gave him meat to eat which had been saturated with a fatal poison. The fifth occasion was when Khusro Pervaiz, Emperor of

Persia, had made up his mind to destroy him and had sent his emissaries to arrest him. His delivery on all these dangerous occasions and his ultimate triumph over all his enemies is conclusive proof that he was righteous and God was with him.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 263-264, footnote]

Perfect Morals of the Holy Prophet^{SA} in Adversity and Victory

Prophets and saints are raised so that people should follow them in all their moral qualities and that all seekers after truth should tread the path along which God has made them steadfast. It is obvious that high moral qualities are proved by their exercise on the proper occasion and it is only then that they are most effective. For instance, forgiveness is praiseworthy when the wronged one has the power to take revenge, and piety is trustworthy when it is exercised at a time when means of self-indulgence are at hand. God's design with regard to Prophets and saints is that every type of high moral quality should be manifested by them and should be clearly established.

To fulfil this design God Almighty divides their lives into two parts. One part is passed in hardships and under calamities, in which they are tormented and persecuted so that those of their high moral qualities might be manifested which can only be manifested during great hardship. If they are not subjected to great hardship, it cannot be affirmed that they were faithful to their Lord in the face of all calamities and pressed further forward in the face of hardships. They are grateful to God Almighty that He chose them for His favours and considered them worthy that they should be persecuted in His cause. God

Almighty afflicts them with misfortunes so that their endurance and steadfastness and fidelity might be manifested and they might illustrate the proverb that:

الْإِسْتِقَامَةُ فَوْقَ الْكِرَامَةِ¹⁸⁵

Perfect steadfastness is not manifested in the absence of great hardships, and is appreciated when a person is greatly shaken. These calamities are spiritual bounties in the case of Prophets and saints, through which their high qualities, in which they are matchless and peerless, are manifested and their ranks are promoted in the hereafter. If they were not subjected to severe trials, they would not be awarded these bounties, nor would their sterling qualities be demonstrated to the common people. Their high resolve, fidelity and bravery would not be universally acknowledged. They became matchless, peerless, unique, unreachable, and so perfect and brave as if each of them were a thousand lions in one body and a thousand leopards in one frame. Thus, their power and strength held high in everyone's estimation and they arrived at high ranks of nearness to God.

The second part of the lives of Prophets and saints is perfected in victory, prestige and riches, so that such of their high qualities might be demonstrated for which it is necessary to be victorious, to possess prestige, riches, authority and power. To forgive one's tormentors, and to forbear from one's persecutors, and to love one's enemies, and to wish well to one's ill-wishers, not to love riches nor to be proud of them, and not to be miserly and to open wide the gates of beneficence and generosity, and not to make riches the means of self-indulgence, and

¹⁸⁵ 'Steadfastness is higher than a miracle.' [Publisher]

not to make power an instrument of tyranny and transgression, are all qualities for the demonstration of which it is necessary to possess riches and power. These qualities are demonstrated when a person possesses both wealth and authority.

As without passing through a time of trial and misfortune, and also a time of prosperity and authority, these two types of high qualities cannot be manifested, the Perfect Wisdom of the Divine demanded that Prophets and saints should be provided with both these types of opportunities which comprise thousands of bounties. But the sequence of both these conditions is not the same for everyone. Divine Wisdom ordains in the case of some that the period of peace and comfort should precede the time of troubles, and in the case of others, troubles precede Divine help. In some these conditions are not apparent and in others they are manifested to a perfect degree. In this respect the foremost was the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] for both these conditions were imposed upon him in their perfection in such order that his high qualities were illumined like the sun and thus was fulfilled the verse:

إِنَّكَ لَعَلَّ خُلِقَ عَظِيمٌ¹⁸⁶

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] having been proved to be perfect in both types of high qualities, thus proved the high qualities of all the Prophets, inasmuch as he confirmed their Prophethood and their Books and manifested their being the favourites of God. This repels the objection that the moral qualities

¹⁸⁶ 'Thou dost surely possess high moral excellences.'—Al-Qalam, 68:5 [Publisher]

of Jesus [peace be on him] in respect of both these types were not established to a perfect degree, and indeed they were not established even with regard to one type. It is true that Jesus showed steadfastness under distress, but the perfection of this quality would only have been demonstrated had Jesus obtained authority and superiority over his persecutors, had forgiven them from the bottom of his heart as the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] having obtained complete victory over the Meccans and others and having them at his mercy, forgave them, with the exception of a few who had been condemned by God to undergo punishment for their specific crimes. Having achieved victory, he announced to them:

لا تثريب عليكم اليوم¹⁸⁷

On account of this forgiveness which had appeared impossible in the estimation of his opponents, who considering their own misdeeds deemed themselves already condemned to death, thousands of people accepted Islām within an hour. The steadfastness of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which he had demonstrated for a long period under their severe persecution became illumined in their eyes like the sun. It is part of man's nature that the greatness of a person's steadfastness is illustrated perfectly when he forgives his persecutors after obtaining power over them. That is why the high qualities of Jesus in the matter of steadfastness and meekness and endurance were not fully demonstrated and it did not become clear whether his steadfastness was by his choice or was under compul-

¹⁸⁷ 'No blame shall lie on you this day.' [Publisher]

sion. Jesus did not acquire power and authority over his persecutors so that it cannot be determined whether he forgave his enemies, or would have avenged himself upon them.

As a contrast, the high qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were demonstrated on hundreds of occasions and their reality shone forth like the sun. The qualities of generosity, beneficence, sacrifice, bravery, piety, contentment and withdrawal from the world were demonstrated more clearly and brilliantly in the case of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] than in the case of any other Prophet. God Almighty bestowed great treasures upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and he spent them all in the cause of God and did not spend a penny on self-indulgence. He raised no structures and built no mansions, but spent the whole of his life in a mud hut, which was no different from the dwelling of the poorest person. He behaved benevolently towards those who had persecuted him and helped them in their distress out of his own resources. He lived in a small adobe hut and slept on the ground and ate of barley bread or went without food. He was granted abundant wealth of the world, but he did not soil his holy hands with it and always preferred poverty to wealth and meekness to power. From the day of his advent to the day when he returned to his Companion on High, he attached no importance to anything except to his Lord. He gave proof of his bravery, fidelity and steadfastness in battle against thousands of enemies, solely for the sake of God, when death appeared a certainty.

In short, God Almighty manifested such high qualities as

benevolence, piety, contentment, bravery and all that pertained to the love of the Divine in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) the like of which had not appeared in the world before him, nor will appear after him. In the case of Jesus, these high qualities were not clearly established for they can only be proved in a period of power and riches and these were not granted to Jesus. Thus in his case, both types of qualities remained hidden as conditions for their demonstration were not present, but this objection which can be raised against the deficiency in the case of Jesus has been repelled by the perfect example of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] inasmuch as his beneficent example perfects and completes the case of every Prophet, and through him whatever had remained hidden or doubtful in the case of Jesus and other Prophets shone forth brightly. Revelation and Prophethood came to an end in that holy person in the sense that all excellences reached their climax in him. *This is the grace of Allāh. He bestows it upon whom He wills.*

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 276-292, footnote 11]

God Almighty divided the life of our Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] into two parts, **one** of pain and troubles and suffering and the **other** of victory, so that during the period of suffering those qualities might be manifested which belong to the period of suffering, and in the period of victory and power, those qualities might be demonstrated that cannot be established without power. Thus, both types of qualities were clearly established in his case by his passing through both these periods. By reading the history of his period of distress, which extended over thirteen years in Mecca, it becomes clear that he demonstrated those qualities which

the perfectly righteous demonstrate in the period of distress, that is to say, trusting in God and abstaining from complaining and not slackening in his work and not standing in awe of anyone, in such manner that the disbelievers believed on witnessing such steadfastness and bore witness that unless a person had full trust in God, he could not endure suffering with such steadfastness.

When the stage of victory, power and prosperity arrived the high qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]—his forgiveness, generosity, bravery—were demonstrated so perfectly that a large number of disbelievers observing those qualities believed in him. He forgave his persecutors and gave security to those who had expelled him from Mecca and enriched their needy ones. Having obtained authority over his principal enemies, he forgave them. Many people, observing his high qualities, testified that unless a person came from God and was truly righteous, he could not possess such qualities. That is why the old rancour of his enemies was immediately removed. The Holy Qur'ān testifies to his exemplary morals in this verse:

قُلْ إِن صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ¹⁸⁸

This means that: Tell them that my worship and my sacrifice and my life and my death are all for God alone, that is my whole life is devoted to manifesting the glory of God and providing comfort for His creatures so that with my death they might regain spiritual life.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 10, pp. 447-448]

Greater than all honours is the honour of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which

¹⁸⁸ Al-An'ām, 6:163 [Publisher]

has affected the whole Islāmic world. His honour revived the world. In Arabia, adultery, drinking and fighting were rife. Human rights were completely disregarded. There was no sympathy for mankind. Even the rights of God were repudiated altogether. Stones and plants and stars were invested with Divine attributes. Diverse types of *shirk* were widespread. Not only man but even human genitals were worshipped. If a person possessing a sane nature were to observe those conditions even for a short while he would behold a terrible scene of darkness, wrongdoing and tyranny. Paralysis strikes on one side, but this was a paralysis which had struck both sides. The world had been completely corrupted. There was security neither on water nor on land.

The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] appeared in this age of darkness and destruction, and reformed perfectly both sides of the balance and re-established the rights of God and the rights of man on their true centre. The moral power of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] can be estimated by considering the condition of the age. The persecutions to which he and his followers were subjected and the treatment that he accorded to his enemies, when he obtained power over them, demonstrate the height of his rank.

There was no torment that Abū Jahl and his companions did not inflict upon the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and his devoted companions. Poor Muslim women were tied to the feet of camels which were then driven in opposite directions and their bodies were thus torn asunder; their only offence being that they believed:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁸⁹

He endured everything with steadfastness and when Mecca fell, he forgave his enemies, reassuring them: **No blame shall lie on you this day.** This was the perfection of high moral qualities which is not found in any other Prophet. *Send down Thy blessings O Allāh on Muḥammad and his people.*

[Malfūzāt, Vol. II, pp. 79-80]

True Victory of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

The community of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had developed such unity and spiritual oneness that through the spirit of Islāmic brotherhood, they had all become like the limbs of one body. The rays of the light of Prophethood had so coloured their daily lives and their overt and covert conduct, that they had become the reflections of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. This great miracle of inner change, through which rank idol worshippers became sincere worshippers of God and those who were sunk in the world every moment established such strong relationship with God that they shed their blood like water in His cause, was the result of their spending their lives in full sincerity in the company of the true and perfect Prophet^{SA}.

[Fath-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 21-22]

The life of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a life of grand success. In his high moral qualities, his spiritual power, his high resolve, the excellence and perfection of his teaching, his perfect ex-

¹⁸⁹ There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. [Publisher]

ample and the acceptance of his prayers, in short, in every aspect of his life, he exhibited such bright signs that even a person of low intelligence, provided he is not inspired by unreasonable rancour and enmity, is forced to confess that he was the perfect example of reflecting Divine qualities and was indeed the perfect man.

[Al-Ḥakam, 10 April 1902, p. 5]

Have you any notion what was the strange event that occurred in the desert country of Arabia when hundreds of thousands of the dead were revived within a brief period and those who had been misguided through generations put on Divine colour, and those who were blind obtained sight, and those who had been dumb began to speak of the understanding of the Divine, and the world underwent a revolution which had never been seen or heard of before? **It was the supplications during dark nights of one who had lost himself in God which raised a clamour in the world, and manifested such wonders as appeared impossible in the case of that unlearned helpless one. Send down Thy blessings and peace, O Allāh, on him and his people according to the amount of pain and anguish he felt for his Ummah, and pour down upon him the lights of Thy mercy forever.**

[Barakāt-ud-Du‘ā, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, Vol. 6, pp. 10-11]

Whatever happened in the beginning of Islām was the result of the supplications of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which he had submitted to God Almighty with his tears in the streets of Mecca. All the grand victories which changed the entire aspect of the world were the result of his prayers. The weakness of his companions may be judged from the fact that in the battle of Badr, between them they possessed only three

wooden swords.

[Al-Ḥakam, 17 September 1906, p. 4]

The reform that was carried out by our lord and master, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was very sweeping and general, and was acknowledged on all hands. This degree of reform had not been achieved by any previous Prophet. If anyone studies the history of Arabia, he would come to know how bigoted the idol worshippers, Jews, and Christians of the time were, and how much their reform had been despaired of for centuries. Then the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, which were wholly opposed to them, proved so effective that they swept aside every false doctrine and every vice. Drinking was abolished, gambling was discarded, infanticide was put down and everything that was opposed to compassion and justice and purity was suppressed. It is true also that offenders were suitably punished for their offences. No one can, however, deny the greatness of the reform that was carried out.

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān No. I, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 9, p. 366 footnote]

Devotion to the Holy Prophet^{SA}

In our estimation, there is no greater testimony than the testimony of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. My heart trembles when I hear that any person who is confronted with a decision of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] does not accept it and turns away from it.

[Itmām-ul-Ḥujjah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 8, p. 293]

The Muslims are a people who are ready to lay down their lives to uphold the honour of their Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. They would

prefer to die rather than endure the disgrace that they should make peace and become friends with such people who are occupied day and night with abusing the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and mention his name with contempt in their books, journals, and announcements and use vile language with reference to him. Such persons are not the well-wishers even of their own people, for they create numberless difficulties for them. I tell you truly that it is possible for us to make peace with the serpents of the jungle and the wild beasts of the forests, but we cannot make peace with those who do not refrain from speaking ill of God's Prophets and who consider that abuse and vituperation mean victory. True victory is that which comes from heaven.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 385-386]

The insults that have been offered to Islām and the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], the attacks that have been made against Divine Law and the apostasies and heresies that have become widespread, cannot be matched in any other age. Is it not true that in a short while in India alone a hundred thousand people have become Christians, and more than sixty million books have been published in opposition to Islām, and people belonging to high families have lost their religion, and those who used to describe themselves as the descendants of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] have put on the garment of Christianity and have become his enemies, and numberless books full of vile abuse of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] have been published? My heart cries out with tears that if these people had murdered my children before my eyes, and had cut to pieces my sincere friends, and had killed me with great humiliation, and

had possessed themselves of all my property, I would not have been so pained and my heart would not have been so hurt as it has been pained and hurt by the insults offered to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 51-52]

Poems in Remembrance of the Holy Prophet^{SA}

Al-Qaṣīdah—An Ode in Praise of the Holy Prophet^{SA} (Arabic Poem)

O fountainhead of Divine grace and knowledge!
All creation flocks towards you like the thirsty.

O ocean of the grace of the Generous Benefactor!
Multitudes throng towards you holding empty cups.

O sun of the kingdom of beauty and grace!
You have illumined the face of deserts and dwellings
alike.

A nation had the honour to behold you and another
heard
Of this full moon that has enchanted me.

They shed tears in remembrance of your beauty;
And the pangs of separation from you make them cry.

I find hearts throbbing wildly;
And tears streaming from the eyes.

O ye who in his light and radiance is like the sun and
the moon;
And has illumined the day with his light.

O full moon of ours, O the sign of our Gracious Lord!
O the most guided of all guides, and the bravest of all
the brave.

I perceive in your bright face
A quality far superior to human qualities.

He is genial, gracious, bounteous, lover of
righteousness;
Generous, and one who has excelled all the youth.

He surpasses all creation in his perfection and beauty;
In his glory, and his pleasant nature.

No doubt, Muḥammad is the best of creation;
He is the elect of the elect and chief of chiefs.

All excellence attained perfection in his person;
The bounties of every age reached their climax in him.

I call Allāh to witness that Muḥammad is His
vicegerent;
Through him alone access is possible to the Divine
court.

He is the pride of every pious and holy person;
In him does the spiritual army take pride.

He is superior to all those who attained nearness to
Allāh in earlier times;
For the criterion of excellence is virtue, not time.

A light drizzle often precedes rain;
But there is a world of difference between the two.

He is the one and only archer whose arrows never miss
the target;
He is the master archer whose arrows hit the target and
kill the Satan.

He is like a heavenly garden: I see his fruits;
Whose bunches have been lowered towards my heart.

I found him an ocean of verities and guidance:
Full of lustre like a pearl.

Verily ‘Īsā—Jesus—quietly breathed his last, but our

Prophet is alive;
God is my witness, I have had the honour to meet him.
I swear by Allāh! I have witnessed his beautiful
countenance;
With my own eyes while sitting in my house.
Our Holy Prophet is alive—of this I am a witness;
And I have been blessed with the fruit of converse with
him.
I had the honour of witnessing his blessed countenance
in my early youth;
He graced me with his presence when I was wide
awake.
Surely, I have been brought back to life by his life-
giving grace,
Praise be to Allāh, What a miracle! What a life he has
granted me!
O my Lord, shower Your blessings upon the Holy
Prophet,
Ever and always, here and in the hereafter.
O my master! I have come to your door as the one
wronged and aggrieved;
For my people have hurt me by calling me a *kāfir*.
Do look upon me with mercy and compassion!
O my master, I am the humblest of your slaves.
O my beloved! My soul, my senses, my heart;
Are all saturated with your love.
O garden of my delight, never for a moment,
Am I without the remembrance of your countenance.
Overwhelmed with longing, my body yearns to fly
towards you;
If only I had the power to fly!!!

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp.590-594]

Qualities of the Holy Prophet^{SA} (Arabic Poem)

O my Heart! remember Aḥmad,¹⁹⁰

Source of guidance and annihilator of enemies.

He is pious, kind and benevolent;
An ocean of bounties and beneficence.

He is bright like the full moon;
Praiseworthy in all his qualities.

His benevolence captures hearts;
His beauty quenches the thirst.

The oppressors rejected him,
So unjustly, and with such arrogance!

No one can deny the truth
When it becomes manifest.

Go and find someone perfect like him;
You will be humbled and bewildered.

We have not seen anyone like him
Who so wakes up the sleeping ones.

He is the light of God that has resuscitated
All branches of knowledge afresh.

He is the elect, the chosen one;
The guide, and the source of grace.

The rain of guidance is but a part
Of the heavy rains of his generosity.

The world forgot its light drizzle,
When they saw the torrential rain from this leader.

Today the mean try to put out
And extinguish the light of his guidance.

¹⁹⁰ Aḥmad is a name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{SA}. [Translator]

Sooner or later,
Allāh will manifest his light.

O rain that pours day and night,
You have been safeguarded from destruction.

You have nourished the trees of low lands
And high lands with your bounties.

We have found you to be the haven of refuge;
Hence after finding such a great haven,
We are no longer afraid of adverse circumstances,
Nor are we scared of the horrors of any sword.

We fear not the vicissitudes of time;
Nor are we frightened by threats.

At the time of every crisis,
We turn to our Lord.

In many a contest,
Between me and the opposing hordes,
I emerged victorious, honoured,
And a recipient of divine succour.

Praise be to Allāh! Praise be to Him!
As we have recognized our guide.

My friend! It is Allāh indeed,
Who has favoured us with this gift.

He is the Night of Decree,
Whose bounties are perennial.

[Karāmāt-uṣ-Ṣādiqīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 7, pp. 70-71]

The Faith of Muḥammad^{SA} (Urdū Poem):

I let my fancy fly in all directions,
But I did not find a faith like the faith of Muḥammad.

There is no religion which shows the signs of truth;
This fruit I tasted only in the garden of Muḥammad.

I tested Islām myself—It is light upon light;
Wake up, I have informed you in time.

.....
No one came for a trial, even though
I challenged every opponent to compete.

.....
Come, O ye people! Herein you will find the light of
God;

Lo! I have told you the way of satisfaction.

Today those lights are surging in this humble one;
I have coloured my heart with every hue of those lights.

Ever since I received that light from the light of the
Prophet,

I have joined myself with the True One.

Countless blessings and peace be upon Muṣṭafā^{SA};
Allāh is my witness: from Him I received this light.

My soul is forever wedded to the soul of Muḥammad^{SA};
I have filled my heart to the brim with this elixir.

.....
I swear by your countenance, O my dear Aḥmad^{SA};
For your sake alone, have I taken up all this burden.

.....
O my Beloved! I swear by Your Uniqueness;
I have forgotten all about myself in Your love.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 224-225]

The Perfect Prophet^{SA} (Urdu Couplets)

The ignorant of Europe say: "This Prophet is not
perfect;
What was the difficulty in spreading faith among the
uncivilised?"

But to convert the uncivilised into civilised people is a
miracle;
Which manifests the meaning of the secret of

Prophethood.

He brought the light from heavens, he himself was light;

What is the harm if he was born among an uncivilised people?

What difference does it make to the light of the shining moon;

Whether it rises from the border of Rome or from Zanzibar?

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 21, p. 144]

Grandeur of Aḥmad^{SA} (Urdū Couplet)

Beyond all thoughts and imagination

Is the status of Aḥmad^{SA};

Whose servant, you can see,

Is the Messiah of the age!

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 22, pp. 286, footnote]

Our Leader^{SA} (Urdū Poem)

He is our leader, who is the source of all light;

His name is Muḥammad^{SA}; he alone is my beloved.

All Prophets are holy, one better than the other;

But from the Almighty, he is the best of the creation.

He is far better than those before him, he is a darling in his qualities;

Every eye is focused on him, he is the full moon which dispels all darkness.

Those who came earlier, were fatigued halfway; He it is who brought us to the shore;

May I be a sacrifice; he alone is the guide.

He removed the screen, and showed the secret path;

He joined the hearts to the Beloved, such a friend he is!

That Friend, beyond all physical limitations, that

Unseen Beloved;
 We saw through him, so he is the true guide.
 Today he is the King of faith; the Crown of the apostles;
 He is pure and holy, this is his eulogy.
 All commandments ordained by the True God were
 demonstrated in practice by him;
 He revealed all secrets, an excellent gift is this.
 His vision is far-reaching like a telescope, his heart is
 close to the Friend;
 In his hands is the light of faith; he is the fountain of
 light.
 He revealed the weighty secrets of faith;
 He is the King who grants wealth.
 I am a sacrifice at that light; I belong entirely to him;
 He is all, what worth do I possess? This is the final
 verdict.
 That Unique Beloved is the source of all learning;
 All else is a mere tale, this is the truth unblemished.
 We found everything through him, O Allāh You are a
 witness;
 He is that manifestor of Beauty, who showed us the
 Truth.
 We were blind of the heart, with hundreds of knots
 upon the hearts;
 The one who opened the locks is this very *Mujtabā*—
 accepted one.

[Qādiān ke Āryā aur Hum, Rūhānī Khazā'in Vol. 20, p. 456]

Fire of Devotion to the Beauty of Muḥammad^{SA} (Persian Poem)

I am ready to offer my heart and soul
 For the beauty of **Muḥammad^{SA}**;
 My body is merely the dust of the lane

Treaded by the progeny of **Muḥammad**^{SA}.

I have seen with my heart's eye
And heard with perceptive ears;
The trumpet of the beauty of **Muḥammad**^{SA}
Echoes everywhere.

This ever-flowing water which I distribute
Freely among God's creatures;
Is but a drop from the ocean
Of the excellences of **Muḥammad**^{SA}.

The fire that burns within me
Is the fire of the love of **Muḥammad**^{SA};
The water that I possess
Is from the sweet and pure water of **Muḥammad**^{SA}.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, Vol. 1, p. 97]

Manifestation of the Eternal God (Persian Poem)

Except the Lord of Mercy,
Who can ever comprehend the lofty station of Aḥmad^{SA}.
He effaced himself to such an extent
As if the letter 'M' had fallen away from the name
'Aḥmad'^{SA 191}.

So lost was he in the Beloved Lord,
That because of his extreme love
His person became the very similitude
Of the Gracious Lord.

From his holy countenance

¹⁹¹ Aḥmad is composed of four Arabic letters—*Alif*, *Ḥā*, *Mīm*, and *Dāl*. When the *Mīm* is dropped, the three remaining letters—*Alif*, *Ḥā*, and *Dāl*—make the word *Aḥad*, which is an attribute of Almighty Allāh, meaning Unique. The line purports to say that by freeing himself completely from his own self, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh upon him] became a true manifestation of Allāh, the Unique.

Emanates the fragrance of the True Beloved;
His divinely inspired person and its attributes
Became the very mirror of the Eternal Lord.

Even if I am accused of heresy and disbelief,
I cannot help saying:
There is no loftier Divine Throne
Than the heart of the Holy Prophet—Aḥmad^{SA}.

God be thanked
That despite opposition on the part of the worldly-wise
I would court a thousand and one troubles
For the sake of that Spring of Grace.

By the grace of God
And by His bounties
I am an enemy of the Pharaoh and his hordes,
Because I love this Moses of mine—the Holy Prophet^{SA}.

The unique and exalted station
Of the Holy Prophet^{SA} as revealed to me
(was so passing strange) that
I can't help proclaiming it aloud
If only I could find
One eager heart along the path.

This alone is my wish, my prayer, and my firm resolve
That may my heart and soul be sacrificed
In the sacred path of love
For the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{SA}.

[Taudīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 62-63]

The Status of Aḥmad^{SA} (Persian Poem)

My heart is aflame praising the Holy Prophet;
Who has no peer in excellence.

Who loves the Eternal Friend with all his heart,
And whose soul is in communion with the Beloved.

He who is the recipient of divine favours,
And has been brought up like a child in the lap of God.

He is an ocean of virtue and piety,
And is a unique pearl in all its splendour.

In generosity and beneficence, he is like the spring rain;
His bounties and favours are like those of the sun.

He is ever merciful and is the sign of divine mercy;
He is gracious and is the manifestation of divine grace.

His countenance is so blessed that one glimpse of it
Transforms an ugly face into a beautiful one.

Like a star, his enlightened soul has lit up
Countless hearts which were full of darkness.

He is so blessed that his coming
Signifies the mercy of the Lord of all the worlds.

He is Aḥmad of the latter days, it is for his light
That human hearts became brighter than the sun.

He is more beautiful than all the progeny of Adam;
He is purer than the purest pearl.

From his lips issues forth the fountain of wisdom;
His heart overflows with the water of *Kauthar*—the
heavenly stream.

For the sake of God, he repudiated all else;
On land and sea there is none like him.

God has granted him the lamp
Which is forever immune from any danger or
windstorm.

Champion warrior of the Lord God;
Wearing his dagger with great dignity.

His arrow has demonstrated its swiftness in every field;
His sword has displayed its skill everywhere.

He proved the helplessness of idols to the world;
He plainly showed the power of the One, All-Powerful
God.

Lest the idols, their makers, and worshippers
Should remain ignorant of the power of God.

He loves truth, straightforwardness and uprightness;
He is the enemy of falsehood and evil.

He is the master, yet he is a servant to the helpless;
He is the king, yet he is like a servitor to the weak.

The compassion that the world received from him,
None has ever experienced even from a mother.

He is intoxicated with the wine of the Beloved's love;
For His sake, he is so prostrate and humble.

His light reached out to every people,
And lit up every country.

For everyone with insight, he is the sign of the Gracious
God;

He is the proof of God for all who have eyes to see.

Out of compassion, he is the help of the helpless;
With his loving kindness, he shares the grief of the
grief-stricken.

His countenance exceeds the sun and the moon in
beauty;
The dust of his threshold is more fragrant than musk
and ambergris.

How can the sun and the moon be like him?
In his heart shine hundreds of suns of divine light.

A single look at the beautiful one
Is better than eternal life.

I who am so well aware of his beauty,
Will give my very life, while others offer their hearts.

Remembrance of his countenance
Sends me into transports of ecstasy;
I am in a state of perpetual intoxication,
Having drank from his goblet.

I would keep on flying towards his lane forever;
Had I but the wings.

Of what use are to me the two lips and the sweet basil,
When I have fallen in love with that beautiful face.

His beauty pulls at the strings of my heart;
The powerful one drags me along with great force.

I found him to be the light of the eyes;
And in its impact, his love is like the bright sun.

Resplendent became the face that did not turn away
from him.

He found the remedy, who held on to his threshold.

Everyone who dares enter the ocean of faith without
him,

Misses his port at the very outset.

He is unlettered, yet peerless in knowledge and wisdom;
Can there be brighter testimony than this?

God granted him that elixir of knowledge and
understanding;
Before whose dazzling light, every star paled into
insignificance.

Through him the all human potentials
Were fully actualized.

Every excellence is culminated in his holy person;
Without doubt the reign of all Prophets ended with his
coming.

He is the sun for all time and space;
He is the guide of all—the black and the brown.

The meeting point of the ocean of knowledge and
recognition of Allāh;
Combining in him the attributes of the sun and the
shade.

My eyes searched all around but did not find
A fountain fairer than his faith.

For seekers, there is no guide except him;
For pilgrims, there is no leader other than him.

His is the exalted station whose intensity of light
Would scorch the wings of the Holy Spirit.

Almighty Allāh has granted him the Law and Faith,
Which is forever immutable.

First he shone upon the land of the Arabs
To cleanse it of all evil.

Then the light of faith and holy law
Covered the world like the sky.

He gave to the people the elixir of life
And rescued them from the jaws of the dragon.

The monarchs of the time were wonder-struck,
As were the sages dumbfounded.

No one could equal his knowledge or power;
He has humbled the pride of the arrogant.

What need has he that anyone should glorify him;
To praise him is an honour for the one who praises.

He resides in the beautiful garden of purity and
grandeur;
Far above the imagination of those who praise him.

O Allāh, convey our greetings to him
And to his brotherhood of Prophets.

.....

We are the humble servants of all the Prophets;
We lie like dust on their threshold.

May our life be sacrificed for the Prophet,
Who showed the way to the True God

O my Lord, by the host of the Prophets,
Whom You sent with Your abundant grace;

Grant me wisdom, as You have granted me a yearning
heart;

Grant me the wine, as You have granted me the goblet.

O my Lord God, for the sake of Your chosen one,
Whom You supported at every step;

Hold my hand with compassion and generosity;
Be my Friend and Helper in all my affairs.

My reliance is on Your power even though
I am like dust, or even humbler still.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 17-23]

Leader of the Lovers of God (Persian Poem)

That sovereign of all the world;
Whose name is Muṣṭafā—the chosen one;
Who is the elite of the lovers of the True God;
Who is bright like the midday sun.

Verily, all light is due to his light;
He who is accepted by him is accepted by God.

He is the one that, for life, is the flowing water;
And a limitless ocean of spiritual insight.

He it is in support of whose truthfulness and excellence,
Hundreds of incontrovertible proofs and arguments
have been made manifest to the world.

His countenance radiates the light of God;

His path manifests the works of God.

All Prophets and truthful ones are his devotees;
They are like dust at his doorstep.

Love for him elevates one to the heaven;
And transforms one like the lambent moon in purity.

He demonstrates to the Pharaohs of every age,
Hundreds of signs like that of the white hand of Moses.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, p. 627, footnote]

Can I ever succeed in adequately praising the exalted
leader;

Whom the heaven and earth and both the worlds cannot
praise enough?

The station of nearness that he has achieved with the
Eternal Beloved

Is beyond the ken of all those who have ever attained
nearness to God.

None in this world can even dream of
The favours with which the eternal beloved continues to
visit him.

He is the leader of the elect of God and king of the
company of lovers;

His soul has traversed every stage of union with the
Beloved.

That blessed one who is the manifestation of divine
signs,

Came as a mercy from the Nourisher of all the worlds.

His is the exalted and unique station in the divine court;
Which is beyond the reach of the elect and the great.

He is Aḥmad of the latter days,
Who is the source of honour for those who came before;
For those of the latter days he is the leader,
Haven of refuge, security and strength.

His distinguished threshold is the ark of protection
For the whole creation;
No one on the Day of Judgement will attain salvation,
But through his intercession.

He surpasses all and every kind of excellence;
The heavens are a mere speck of dust compared to his
great resolve.

He manifests the light which had been hidden since
eternity;
He is the source and exordium of sunrise, which was
hidden since eternity.

The chief of the heavenly congregation and a proof of
God on earth;
A great and powerful sign of the existence of the
Creator.

Every vein and particle of his being is the abode of the
Eternal Beloved;
His every breath and particle is imbued with the beauty
of the Friend.

The beauty of his countenance far exceeds a hundred
suns and moons;
The dust of his threshold is superior to a hundred pieces
of musk for Tataristan.

He is beyond human reason, thought, and imagination;
How can thought dare reach out to that limitless ocean!

His soul is the first to proclaim: '*Balā*'—'Yes, indeed!'
He is the Adam of faith in the Unity of God;
Even before the creation of Adam,
He had communion with the Beloved.

It is embedded in his nature to lay down his life
For God's creatures;
He is ever ready to sacrifice himself for the

downtrodden;
And he is the help of the helpless.

At the time when the world was filled
With idolatry and polytheism;
No heart wept blood
But the heart of that sovereign.

No one was aware of the evil of polytheism
And the filth of idols;
Aḥmad's soul alone was cognizant of it:
His heart was lost in Divine love.

Who knows and who is aware
Of the cries of the intercessor
Which arose for the sake of mankind
In the silence of the cave.

I cannot fathom the pain,
The agony, and the distress,
Which brought him to the cave,
So troubled and full of anguish.

He was afraid neither of the dark,
Nor of loneliness;
He did not fear death,
Nor was he scared of scorpions or snakes.

He deeply loved his people,
He was devoted to mankind and the world;
He cared little about his bodily comfort,
Nor about his personal needs.

He raised cries of pain
For the good of mankind;
Day and night he was preoccupied
In supplication to God.

His humility and prayers
Caused a great commotion
In the heavens:

The angels too were moved to tears

At last, because of his humility,
His prayers and supplications,
The Lord turned with compassion
To the dark and gloomy world.

The world was rocked
By a great storm of sin;
In every land people became blind and deaf
Because of sin and polytheism.

In the time of Noah,
The world was filled with every mischief;
No heart was free
From darkness and dust.

The devils had ruled
Over every body and soul;
Then the All-Powerful Lord appeared in glory
To the soul of Muḥammad.

His grace encompasses alike
The black and the white;
He it is who sacrificed his life
For the sake of mankind.

O Prophet of Allāh!
You alone are the sun of the path of righteousness;
No pious or righteous one, without you
Can find his way to the right path.

O Prophet of Allāh!
Your lips are the life-sustaining fountain;
You alone are the guide
To the path of the True Lord.

There is the one who seeks to hear your sayings
From Tom, Dick and Harry;
There is another who doesn't have to wait:
He hears directly from your own lips.

He indeed is alive, who drinks from your fountain;
Wise is he who follows you.

The ultimate point of knowledge for those who know,
Is the knowledge of your face;
For the truthful, steadfastness and loyalty to you
Is the height of truth.

Without you no one can ever attain
The wealth of true knowledge;
Even if he dies in the exercise
Of unlimited devotion and worship.

To bank on one's own efforts
Without the love of your countenance,
Is to be naïve
For he who is unaware of your face,
Can never see the face of virtue.

Each moment a new light is attained
Through the love of your countenance,
Which the seeker cannot attain
In a whole lifetime.

Of the wonders of the universe,
Whatever is beautiful and sublime;
I clearly behold in you.

No time is better than the time
Spent in your love;
Nor is any pastime more pleasant
Than that devoted to your praise.

Since I am cognizant of your unlimited virtues,
I am eager to sacrifice my life for you;
Whereas others are content with their services.

Everyone supplicates for himself
In his prayers, but;
O my garden of eternal spring!

I supplicate only for your progeny.

O Prophet of Allāh!

I am lost in love with every particle

Of your holy person;

Were I to have a hundred thousand lives,

I would bequeath them all

To be sacrificed in your path.

What is the truth about submission to you,

And love for your countenance?

It is a panacea for every heart,

An elixir for every lacerated soul.

How worthless is the heart,

That does not bleed for you!

How useless is the life,

That is not sacrifice for you!

Because of your love,

My heart does not fear death;

Look at my steadfastness:

I am walking to the scaffold

With a smile!

O mercy of God!

We have come to you seeking your mercy;

Like us, there are hundreds of thousands of hopefuls

Waiting at your threshold.

O Prophet of Allāh! I offer my being

For your lovely countenance;

This head of mine, lying heavy on my shoulder,

Is but an offering in your service.

Ever since I have been allowed

To witness the light of the Holy Prophet;

His love, like a spring,

Has been gushing forth from my heart!

The fire of devotion

Emanates from my breath like lightening;
O weak hearted companions!
Move away from my proximity.

Ever since I saw his countenance in a vision,
My heart is in ecstasy;
My very being, my body, and my soul,
Are but an offering at the altar
Of his body and his countenance.

I see hundreds of thousands of Josephs
In the dimple of his chin;
I see countless Messiahs
Being born by his breath.

He is the sovereign of the seven continents;
He is the sun of the East and the West;
He is king of both the worlds;
He is a haven for the humble.

Successful is the heart,
Which treads faithfully in his path;
Lucky is the head,
That is sacrificed for that warrior.

O Prophet of Allāh!
The world is dark with disbelief and idol worship;
It is time you revealed your face
Which is bright like the sun.

O my beloved! I see the light of God
Reflected in your countenance;
I see the heart of a wise person
Intoxicated with your love.

Lovers and the enlightened
Recognize your station;
But the eyes of the bat
Cannot see the bright midday sun.

Everyone in this world has a beloved, but;

O beloved of rosy countenance!
I am devoted only to you.

Out of the entire world,
I have fallen in love with your lovely face;
I have forsaken my own self for you.

What is life?
To be sacrificed it in your path;
What is freedom?
To be like a prey in your captivity.

As long as I live,
Your love will always dwell in my heart;
As long as blood flows in my heart,
It will always be sustained by my love for you.

O Messenger of Allāh!
My ties with you are very strong indeed;
I have been devoted to you
Ever since I was a suckling infant.

At every step I have taken towards Allāh,
I have seen you as an invisible helper,
A supporter and a guide.

In both the worlds,
So strong is my affiliation to you:
You have nourished me
Like a baby in your lap.

Recall the time when you revealed
Your countenance to me in a vision;
Recall the time when you visited me
With great longing and eagerness.

Call to mind the kindness and favours
That you showered upon me;
Call to mind the glad tidings
You conveyed to me from the Lord.

Recall the time, when in full wakefulness,
 You granted me a glimpse
 Of the loveliness of the charming face
 And the beauty which is the envy of Spring.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūhānī Khazā'in Vol. 5, pp. 23-28]

Muḥammad^{SA} is the Proof of Himself (Persian Poem)

There is a wonderful light in the person of Muḥammad;
 There is a wonderful ruby in the mine of Muḥammad.

The heart is cleansed of all darkness
 When it joins the lovers of Muḥammad.

Alas for the hearts of those unworthy ones;
 Whom turn their backs upon the hospitality of
 Muḥammad.

I know not of anyone in both the world;
 Who has a station equal to Muḥammad.

God is utterly displeased with the person;
 Who bears a grudge against Muḥammad.

God Himself burns that worthless worm;
 Which is among the enemies of Muḥammad.

If you wish to be delivered from the stupor of the lower
 self;

Come and join the ranks of the lovers of Muḥammad.

If you desire that God should praise you;
 Become a true admirer of Muḥammad.

If you desire a proof of his truthfulness, become his
 lover:

Muḥammad himself is the proof of Muḥammad.

My body craves to be sacrificed for the dust of
 Aḥmad's feet;

My heart is ever eager to die for Muḥammad.

By the tresses of the Prophet of God!

I would die for the illumined countenance of
Muḥammad.

Cut me to pieces or burn me to death,
I will not turn away from the court of Muḥammad.

For the sake of faith, I fear no one in the world:
For I am coloured after the faith of Muḥammad.

How easy it becomes to renounce the world,
When remembering the beauty and grace of
Muḥammad!

Every particle of my being has been sacrificed in his
path;

I have witnessed the latent beauty of Muḥammad.

I know not the name of any other teacher;
I have studied at the school of Muḥammad.

I have nothing to do with any other beloved;
I am a prey to the loving ways of Muḥammad.

I only crave a single glance;
I need nothing but the garden of Muḥammad.

Search not for my anguished heart in my bosom;
I have surrendered it to the lap of Muḥammad.

I am the merriest among the birds of Paradise;
That have built their nests in the garden of Muḥammad.

You have illumined my heart and soul with love;
My life is an offering to you, O Muḥammad!

Were I to sacrifice my life for him a hundred times;
Alas! it would not be worthy of the high station of
Muḥammad.

So awe-inspiring is the station granted to this champion;
No one can even dare to compete with Muḥammad.

Beware, O foolish and misguided enemy!

Beware of the sharp sword of Muḥammad!

The path of the Lord God, which mankind has lost;
Seek it in the progeny of Muḥammad.

Beware, O denier of the status of Muḥammad
And of the manifest light of Muḥammad!

Even though miracles are no more;
Come and witness them among the devotees of
Muḥammad.

[Announcement February 20, 1893, Majmū'a Ishtihārāt, Vol.1, pp. 371-372]

Muḥammad^{SA} is our Leader and Guide (Persian Poem):

That Prophet whose name is Muḥammad;
We are forever holding on to his lap.

His love that entered our bodies with the milk of our
mothers;

Became our very life, and will last till death.

He is the best of the Prophets and best of the creation;
Prophethood found perfection in him.

We drink deep the water of his fountain,
Whoever has been satiated, has been satiated by it.

Whatever revelation or inspiration is granted to us;
Is because of him, not because of us.

Through him are we blessed with guidance and
perfection;

Without him, meeting the Eternal Lord is impossible.

To follow every one of his commandments is ingrained
in me;

Whatever is proven to be from him is my faith.

[Sirāj-e-Munīr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 12, p. 95]

“My heart yearns every moment to kiss Thy Book;
And to perform circuits around the Qur’ān, for this is my
Ka‘bāh.”

The Holy Qur’ān

“The Holy Qur’ān is a casket of jewels,
but people are sadly unaware of it”

4

THE HOLY QUR'ĀN

Purpose of Scriptures

We are a witness and testify before the whole world that we have found in the Holy **Qur'ān** the reality that leads to God. We have heard the voice of God and have witnessed the signs of the mighty arm of Him Who has revealed the Qur'ān. We believe that He is the True God and is the Master of the worlds. Our heart is filled with this certainty as the ocean is filled with water. We, therefore, invite everyone to this faith and to this light on the basis of enlightened perception. We have found the **true light** which dispels all darkness and which really renders the heart cold to all that is beside God. This is the only way by following which a person emerges from the grip of passion and the darkness of the ego as a snake sloughs off its skin.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, p. 65]

It is an obvious fact that the great merit of anything lies in its fulfilling the purpose for which it has been made. For instance, if a bullock is purchased for ploughing land its merit will be judged by the degree to which it is able to discharge its function of ploughing. In the same way, it is obvious that the true purpose of a heavenly Book is that it should rescue its followers from every sin and the sinful life through its teaching and influence, and its power of reform and spiritual qualities, and should bestow a pure life upon them, and after purifying them, should bestow upon them full insight for the recognition of God and should establish a relationship of love and

devotion between them and the Peerless Being, Who is the Fountainhead of all joys. In truth, this love is the root of salvation and this is the paradise on entering which all fatigue, bitterness, pain and torment are removed. Without doubt, the living and perfect revealed Book is the one which should lead a seeker after God to his goal and, rescuing him from a low life, should lead him to the True Beloved, meeting Whom is salvation itself. It should rescue him from all doubts and should bestow such perfect understanding upon him as if he can see God. It should establish such strong relationship between God and him that he should become a faithful servant of God and God should be so benevolent towards him that He should make a distinction between him and those beside him with diverse types of His help and support and should open the gates of His understanding to him.

If a book fails to discharge this duty, which is its real purpose, and seeks to establish its merit by making other irrelevant claims, it would be like a person who claims to be an expert physician, but when a patient is brought to him and he is asked to heal him, he replies that he is unable to heal him, but that he knows how to wrestle, or that he is an expert in astronomy or philosophy. It is obvious that such a person would be called a jester and would deserve the condemnation of all reasonable people. The chief purpose of a Book of God and a Messenger of God is to rescue the world from a life of sin and to establish a holy relationship between God and the world. It is not their purpose to teach people subjects of secular study and to instruct them in worldly inventions.

It is not difficult for a reasonable and just person to un-

derstand that the purpose of a Book of God is to lead people to God, and to make them believe in Him as a certainty, and to stop them from committing sin by impressing the majesty and awe of God upon their hearts. Of what use is a book which cannot cleanse a heart, nor can bestow such pure and perfect understanding as should make one hate sin? The attraction of sin is a dangerous leprosy which cannot be healed till the manifestations of the living understanding of God, and the signs of His awe, greatness and power, descend like rain and till a person perceives God with His awe-inspiring powers as a goat perceives a tiger which is only two steps away from it. Man needs to be freed from the fatal passion of sin. The greatness of God should so occupy his heart that it should rid him of the overpowering desire of passion which falls upon him like lightning and instantly consumes his store of righteousness.

Can such impure passions as attack repeatedly like epilepsy and destroy all sense of piety be wiped out by any self-conceived concept of God? Or can they be suppressed by one's own thinking, or be blocked by an atonement whose suffering has not been personally experienced? Certainly not. This is not a matter of indifference but in the estimation of a wise person it is worthy of consideration above all else as to how he might safeguard himself against the ruin which confronts him on account of his daring and his lack of relationship with God, the root of which is sin and disobedience. It is obvious, that a person cannot give up a certain pleasure for the sake of a conjecture. It is only a certainty that can rescue one from another certainty. For instance, if we are certain that there are a number of deer in a forest whom we can easily catch, we are incited by that certainty to

enter the forest for that purpose; but if we are also certain that there are half a hundred lions in the forest and thousands of blood-thirsty pythons, we would be dissuaded from making the attempt. Thus, sin cannot be avoided without this degree of certainty. It is only iron that can break iron. There should be that certainty of the greatness and awe of God which should tear up the curtains of heedlessness, and should make the body tremble, and should make death appear near. The heart should be so overcome by fear that all relationship with the sinful ego should be cut asunder and one should be drawn by hidden hands towards God and the heart should be filled with certainty that God Who is truly present does not leave a daring offender without punishment. What shall a seeker after true purity do with a book which does not fill this need?

Supremacy of the Holy Qur'ān

Holy Qur'ān Fulfils the Purpose of the Scriptures

I wish to convey it to everyone that the Holy Qur'ān is the Book which fulfils all these needs. Through it, a person is drawn to God and his heart grows cold to the love of the world. For those who follow it, God, Who is hidden beyond the hidden, in the end manifests Himself and displays those powers of which outsiders have no notion, and informs of His existence by the affirmation: **I am present.**

But the Vedās certainly do not possess this quality. They are like a worn out bundle whose owner is dead or is not traceable. The Permeshwar towards whom the Vedās call is not proved to be living. Indeed, the Vedās put forward no proof that their Permeshwar exists. The misleading

teaching of the Vedās has rendered it doubtful that one could find the Creator through His creation; inasmuch as, according to the teachings of the Vedās, souls and particles are all eternal and uncreated, then how can one discover the Creator through that which is uncreated? Also, the Vedās shut the door of Divine revelation and deny the fresh Signs of God. According to the Vedās, Permeshwar cannot display a Sign in support of His special servants which should be beyond the knowledge or experience of the average person. The utmost that can be said about the Vedās is that they affirm the existence of God like an average being, and do not put forward any certain proof in support of the existence of God.

In short, the Vedās cannot bestow that understanding which comes fresh from God and conveys a person from earth to heaven. However our observation and experience, and of those who have passed before us, is witness that the Holy Qur'ān draws its true follower to itself through its spiritual effect and its inherent light and illumines his heart, and then, by displaying great signs, creates such a strong relationship with God as cannot be cut asunder by a sharp sword. It opens the eye of the heart, banks up the dirty spring of sin, honours one with the delicious converse of God, discloses that which is hidden and helps acceptance of prayer and gives information of it. God Almighty, through His awe-inspiring signs, makes it manifest to everyone who opposes a true follower of the Holy Qur'ān that He is with that servant of His who follows His Word.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 305-309]

God, in whose meeting is man's salvation and eternal happiness, cannot be found without following the Holy

Qur'ān. Would that people could see that which I have seen and they could hear that which I have heard and give up following stories and run towards reality. The means of obtaining perfect knowledge through which one can see God, the cleansing water which removes all doubts, and the mirror through which one can behold that High Being, is the converse with God which I have just mentioned. He whose soul seeks the truth should arise and search for it.

I say truly that if souls were inspired by true search and hearts felt true thirst, people would look for this way and would search for it. I assure the seekers that **Islām** alone gives the good news of this way, for other people have since long sealed up the possibility of revelation. Be sure that this seal is not set by God, but as man has deprived himself of this favour, he seeks excuses for its absence. As it is not possible that we should be able to see without eyes, hear without ears, or speak without a tongue, in the same way, it is not possible that we should be able to behold the countenance of the sweet Beloved without the Holy Qur'ān. I was young and am now old, but I have found no one who might have drunk of this clear understanding without this holy fountain.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 10, pp. 442-443]

The straight path and the principal means which is full of the light of certainty and constant experience, and is the perfect guide for our spiritual welfare and our intellectual progress, is the Holy Qur'ān which is charged with the settlement of all the religious contests of the world. Each and every word of it consistently carries thousands of repeated confirmations and it contains a large quantity of the waters of life for us and comprises many rare and

priceless jewels which are hidden in it and are being displayed every day. It is an excellent touchstone whereby we can distinguish between truth and falsehood. It is the one bright lamp which shows the way of truth. Without doubt, the hearts of those who have a relationship with the straight path are drawn to the Holy Qur'ān. Gracious God has so fashioned their hearts that they are drawn towards this Beloved like a lover and find no rest elsewhere, and hearing a plain and clear directive from it, they listen to nothing else. They accept joyfully and eagerly every verity contained in it. In the end, it becomes the means of illumination of the heart and lighting up the conscience and of wonderful disclosures. It leads everyone to the heights of progress according to their capacities. The righteous have always been in need of walking in the light of the Holy Qur'ān.

Whenever Islām has been confronted with any other religion in consequence of some new condition of the age, the sharp and effective instrument that has immediately come to hand is the Holy Qur'ān. In the same way, whenever philosophic thought has been given publicity in opposition to it, the Holy Qur'ān has destroyed that poisonous plant and has so humiliated it as to provide a mirror to its students which shows up the true philosophy which is contained in the Holy Qur'ān alone and nowhere else.

In the modern age, when Christian missionaries started their propaganda and made an attempt to draw away unintelligent and ignorant people from the Unity of God and to make them worship a humble creature and employed every kind of sophistry for dressing up their doubtful ideas and thus created a storm in India, it was

the Holy Qur'ān which repelled them so that they are not now able to face a well-informed person and their extensive apologetics have been folded up like a piece of paper.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 381-382]

Beauty and Perfection of the Holy Qur'ān

I call Allāh to witness that the Holy Qur'ān is a **rare pearl**. Its outside is light and its inside is light and its above is light and its below is light and there is light in every word of it. It is a spiritual garden whose clustered fruits are within easy reach and through which streams flow. Every fruit of good fortune is found in it and every torch is lit from it. Its light has penetrated to my heart and I could not have acquired it by any other means. And Allāh is my Witness that if there had been no Qur'ān I would have found no delight in life. I find that its beauty exceeds that of a hundred thousand Josephs. I incline towards it with a great inclination and drink it into my heart. It has nurtured me as an embryo is nurtured and it has a wonderful effect on my heart. My self is lost in its beauty. It has been disclosed to me in a vision that the garden of holiness is irrigated by the water of the Qur'ān, which is a surging ocean of the water of life. He who drinks from it, comes to life; indeed, he brings others to life.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 5, pp. 545-546]

The expression *Khātam-un-Nabiyyīn* which has been applied to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] demands that the Book that was revealed to him, should be the most perfect of all books and should comprise all excellences; and indeed so it is. The rule is that whatever degree of spiritual power and inner perfec-

tion is possessed by the person upon whom the word of God descends, the same degree of power and majesty is possessed by that word. As the spiritual power and inner perfection of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were of the highest degree, which no one exceeded or will exceed, therefore the Holy Qur'ān occupies that high station and rank which has not been reached by any of the previous books or scriptures. The capacity and spiritual power of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were the highest of all, and all excellences had reached their climax in him. Therefore, the Holy Qur'ān that was revealed to him is also perfect and as the excellences of Prophethood reached their climax in him, the excellences of the miracle of the word reached their climax in the Holy Qur'ān. Thus he was the *Khātām-un-Nabiyyīn* and his Book was the *Khātām-ul-Kutub*. From the point of view of every aspect of a miraculous word, the Holy Qur'ān is at the highest stage.

The perfection of the Holy Qur'ān is seen and its miraculous character is proved from every point of view, that is to say, from the points of view of excellence of composition, of the sequence of its subjects, of its teaching and its perfection and of the fruits of its teaching. That is why the Holy Qur'ān has not demanded its match from any particular point of view, but has issued a general challenge demanding a match from any point of view. From whichever point of view it is looked at, it is a miracle.

[*Malfūzāt*, Vol. III, pp. 36-37]

The Holy Qur'ān is a miracle the like of which never was and never will be. The door of its graces and blessings is always open, and it is bright and manifest in every age as

it was in the time of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. It should also be borne in mind that the speech of everyone corresponds to his high resolve. The higher the resolve and determination and the purpose of the speaker, the same will be the case with his speech. Divine revelation also follows the same rule. The higher the resolve of the person to whom Divine revelation is vouchsafed, the higher will be the character of the revelation. As the circle of the resolve, capacity and determination of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was very wide, the revelation that came to him had the same high rank. No one else will ever attain the same degree of resolve and courage inasmuch as his message was not for any limited time or for any particular people, as was the case with the Prophets before him. It was said to him:

قُلْ.....إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا¹⁹²

and again:

مَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ¹⁹³

Who can match him, the range and scope of whose Prophethood is so vast! It is an article of faith with us that if any verse of the Holy Qur'ān is again revealed to anyone else, the scope of his revelation will never be as vast as that of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Malfūzāt, Vol. III, p. 57]

The fine verities pertaining to religion, and all the learn-

¹⁹² 'Say, O mankind! truly I am a Messenger to you from Allāh.'—Al-A'rāf, 7:159 [Publisher]

¹⁹³ 'We have sent thee not but as a mercy for all peoples.'—Al-Anbiyā', 21:108 [Publisher]

ing pertaining to the subject of Divinity, and conclusive arguments in support of the truth together with the mysteries and insights that are set out in the Holy Qur'ān, are such that human faculties collectively are not able to discover them nor can the intelligence of an intelligent person alight on them on its own. A consideration of past ages has shown that no philosopher or wise man was able to discover all that knowledge. But in this case, there is a wonder upon wonders, that is to say, that knowledge and insight were bestowed upon one who was entirely unlearned. He had never seen a school nor read a book nor kept company with any learned or wise person. He lived his life among wild people, was born and brought up among them and kept company with them. The Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] being unlettered is a matter so patent that no historian of Islām is unaware of it.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 1, pp. 561-563]

Matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān

Whatever comes into being by the exercise of God's perfect power, whether it is a part of creation, or it is a Holy Book literally revealed by Him, it is necessary that it should possess the quality that no one out of creation should have the power to produce its like. This is proved in two ways; one is by way of deduction. God is One and without associate in His Being, attributes and works, and this does not admit of any partnership with Him in any of His creations, words or actions. If such partnership were permissible in respect of any of His creations, words or actions, then it would be permissible in all His attributes and actions, and as such it would be permissible that there should be another God. That which possesses all

Divine attributes would be God and that which possesses some of the attributes of the Divine, would be a partner of God in respect of those attributes, and this is contrary to reason. It follows that it is necessary that God should be One without associate in all His attributes and words and actions, and His Being should be free from all those inconsistencies which would lead to someone being His partner.

Secondly, it is proved by observation of all those things which have been created by God that none of them could be created by man, not even the least of them like a fly, a mosquito or a spider. On observing their shape and formation, one sees such wonders that furnish conclusive proof of the existence of the Creator of the universe. Besides all these arguments, it is clear to every wise person that were it permissible that someone other than God could have the power to create that which God has created by His power, then no part of creation could be cited as proof of the existence of the True Creator and the matter of His recognition as the Creator would become doubtful; for if some of those things that have been created by God Almighty could be created by someone else, then there is no reason why someone else cannot create everything that God has created.

Now that it is established that it is necessary that that which God has created should be matchless and its matchlessness is conclusive proof of its being from God, this is a complete refutation of the proposition that it is not necessary that the Divine word should be matchless, or that its being matchless is no proof of its being from God.... Matchlessness is a speciality of the work and word of God. Every wise person knows that the principal

means that reason has for establishing the Godhead of the Divine is that everything that proceeds from God is so matchless that it is conclusive proof of the Unity of the Creator. Had this means not been available, the way of reason reaching God would have been closed.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 149-182]

The Holy Qur'ān is a Book which has proclaimed its own matchlessness and has claimed its own greatness, its wisdom, its truth, the beauty of its composition and its spiritual lights. It is not true that the Muslims have themselves put forward these excellences on behalf of the Qur'ān. It sets out its own merits and excellences and puts forward its matchlessness and peerlessness as a challenge to the whole of creation and calls out loudly: **Is there any contestant?** Its verities and fine points are not confined to two or three which would leave room for doubt on the part of an ignorant person, but are like the surging ocean and are visible in every direction like the stars of heaven. There is no truth that lies outside it. There is no wisdom that is not comprised in it. There is no light that is not obtainable through following it. These things are not without proof and are not mere words. It is an established and clearly proved verity which has been shining through 1,300 years. We have set out this verity in great detail in this book and have expounded the fine points of the Qur'ān at such length as to constitute a surging ocean for the satisfaction of a seeker after truth.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 662-665, footnote 11]

The Holy Qur'ān's Lofty Station—Acknowledged by the Holy Qur'ān itself

و كل العلم في القرآن لكن تقاصر منه افهام الرجال¹⁹⁴

One of the principal causes of people going astray in this age is that in the eyes of most people the greatness of the Holy Qur'ān no longer prevails. One group of Muslims has become the follower of misleading philosophy. They seek to decide every matter by reason. They claim that the highest arbiter available to man for the settlement of disputes is reason. When they find that the existence of Gabriel, Azrael and other angels that are mentioned in religious books, and the existence of heaven and hell as is established in the Holy Qur'ān, cannot be proved by reason, they immediately reject them and begin to have recourse to flimsy explanations. They interpret angels as meaning powers, revelation only as a faculty, and heaven and hell as meaning merely spiritual comfort or pain. They do not seem to realize that reason alone is not the instrument for discovery of the unknown. Indeed high verities and extreme insights are far above the reach of reason and are established only through true visions. If the touchstone for verities were to be reason alone, the great wonders of Godhead would remain hidden and man's understanding would remain incomplete and imperfect and he would not be rid of doubts and suspicions. The end of this one-sided understanding would be that in the absence of guidance from above and without any knowledge of the lines of thought that are set in motion by the Power on High, all sorts of doubts would arise with regard to the existence of the Creator Himself.

¹⁹⁴ All knowledge is comprised in the Qur'ān, but the intellect of people falls short of it. [Publisher]

Therefore, the idea that reason alone is sufficient for unravelling all the intricate mysteries of the True Creator, is wholly unsupportable.

The second group has discarded reason altogether and has also left aside the Holy Qur'ān which is the fountain-head of all knowledge of things Divine and has taken firm hold of stories and meaningless sayings. We desire to draw the attention of both these groups to the Holy Qur'ān and to urge them to value its greatness and its light, and to make use of reason in receiving the guidance of its light. They should leave aside the sayings of other people, and even if they should find a *Ḥadīth* which contradicts the Holy Qur'ān, they should discard it immediately, as God Almighty has said in the Holy Qur'ān:

فَيَأْتِي حَدِيثٌ بَعْدَهُ كَأُومُنُونَ¹⁹⁵

In what discourse, leaving aside the Holy Qur'ān, will they believe?

It is obvious that, for us Muslims, the Holy Qur'ān is an authority of the highest grade which is absolute and certain. Most *Aḥādīth*, even when authentic, are at best useful probabilities.

إِنَّ الظَّنَّ لَا يُغْنِي مِنَ الْحَقِّ شَيْئًا¹⁹⁶

Study the following verses carefully and then consider whether it is proper to leave aside the Word of God and to set up some other guide or arbiter. These verses are:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّذِينَ هِيَ أَقْوَمُ¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Al-A'raf, 7:186 [Publisher]

¹⁹⁶ 'Surely conjecture avails nothing against truth.'—Yūnus, 10:37 [Publisher]

This Qur'ān guides to the way which is straight;

لَا فِي هَذَا بَلَلًا لِّقَوْمٍ عَمِينَ 198

To the worshippers it provides guidance about true worship;

وَأِنَّهُ لَتَذِكْرٌ لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ 199

To those who are righteous, it is a reminder of the excellences of righteousness;

وَأِنَّهُ لَحَقُّ الْيَقِينِ 200

And surely it is the true certainty;

حِكْمَةٌ بَالِغَةٌ 201

It is wisdom *par excellence*;

تَبَيَّنَّا لَكُلِّ شَيْءٍ 202

It is certain truth and is universal in scope;

نُورٌ عَلَى نُورٍ 203

It is light upon light;

شِفَاءٌ لِّمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ 204

A cure for the souls;

الرَّحْمَنُ ۝ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ۝ 205

The Gracious God revealed the Holy Qur'ān.

197 Banī Isrā'īl, 17:10 [Publisher]

198 Al-Anbiyā', 21:107 [Publisher]

199 Al-Hāqqah, 69:49 [Publisher]

200 Al-Hāqqah, 69:52 [Publisher]

201 Al-Qamar, 54:6 [Publisher]

202 Al-Naḥl, 16:90 [Publisher]

203 Al-Nūr, 24:36 [Publisher]

204 Yūnus, 10:58 [Publisher]

205 Al-Raḥmān, 55:2-3 [Publisher]

أَنْزَلَ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ وَالْمِيزَانَ ²⁰⁶

He has revealed the Book which is the truth and is a balance for weighing the truth.

هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ ²⁰⁷

It is guidance for mankind and contains the exposition of guidance. It discriminates between truth and falsehood by its reasoning.

إِنَّهُ لَقَوْلُ فَضْلٍ ²⁰⁸

It is a decisive discourse.

لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ ²⁰⁹

It is free from doubt.

وَمَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ²¹⁰

We have revealed it to thee so that it might decide matters concerning which there is difference and so that believers may be provided with guidance and mercy.

فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِسْمَةٌ ²¹¹

It comprises all the verities which were contained in the previous books in a scattered form.

لَا يَأْتِيهِوَا الْبَاطِلُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَلَا مِنْ خَلْفِهِ ²¹²

Falsehood cannot approach it from fore or aft.

هَذَا بَصَائِرُ لِلنَّاسِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ²¹³

²⁰⁶ Al-Shūrā, 42:18 [Publisher]

²⁰⁷ Al-Baqarah, 2:186 [Publisher]

²⁰⁸ Al-Tāriq, 86:14 [Publisher]

²⁰⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:3 [Publisher]

²¹⁰ Al-Naḥl 16:65 [Publisher]

²¹¹ Al-Bayyinah, 98:4 [Publisher]

²¹² Hā Mīm Al-Sajdah, 41:43 [Publisher]

It comprises clear proof for people and is a guidance and a mercy for those who have faith.

فَيَأْتِي حَدِيثٌ بَعْدَ اللَّهِ وَآيَاتِهِ يُؤْمِنُونَ²¹⁴

Then leaving aside Allāh and His Signs, in what discourse will you believe?

It follows that if a *Hadīth* is contradictory of the Holy Qur'ān, it must be rejected. If it can be interpreted as being in accord with the Holy Qur'ān, it might be accepted. The meanings of the remaining verses is:

قُلْ بِفَضْلِ اللَّهِ وَبِرَحْمَتِهِ فَبِذَلِكَ فَلْيَفْرَحُوا هُوَ خَيْرٌ مِمَّا يَجْمَعُونَ²¹⁵

Tell them that by the Grace and Mercy of Allāh this Qur'ān is a precious possession which you should accept with joy. It is better than the properties which you gather together.

This is an indication that no property is as valuable as knowledge and wisdom.

Knowledge of Holy Qur'ān and Promised Messiah

This is the wealth concerning which it had been prophesied that the Messiah would distribute it so much that people will have their fill of it. The prophecy does not mean that the Messiah would collect together material wealth concerning which it has been said:

إِنَّمَا أَمْوَالُكُمْ وَأَوْلَادُكُمْ فِتْنَةٌ²¹⁶

and that he would deliberately put people on trial by distributing wealth among them. In his first advent also, the

²¹³ Al-Jāthiyāh, 45:21 [Publisher]

²¹⁴ Al-Jāthiyāh, 45:7 [Publisher]

²¹⁵ Yūnus, 10:59 [Publisher]

²¹⁶ 'Your possessions and children are but a trial.'—Al-Taghābun, 64:16 [Publisher]

Messiah felt no attraction towards worldly wealth. He has stated in the Gospel that the property of a believer are not gold and silver, but are the jewels of verities and understanding. This is the property that is bestowed by God Almighty on the Prophets, which they distribute. It is concerning this property that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] said:

انما انا قاسم واللّٰه هو المعطي²¹⁷

It is stated clearly in the *Aḥādīth* that the Promised Messiah would come into the world when knowledge of the Qur'ān will be lost and ignorance will prevail. That is the time which is referred to in the *Ḥadīth*:

لو كان الايمان معلقاً عند الثريا لناله رجل من فارس²¹⁸

It has been revealed to me in a vision that the climax of that age will begin in the Hijrī year which corresponds to the value of the letters of the verse:

وَاِنَّا عَلٰى ذٰكَ بِمَقَرٍّ مِّنْهُ لَقٰدِرُوْنَ²¹⁹

which amounts to 1274.

Consider this well and do not pass over it in haste and supplicate God that He should open your minds to it. A little reflection will make you understand the prophecy contained in the *Ḥadīth* that in the latter days the Qur'ān will be taken away from the world, its knowledge will be lost, ignorance will prevail and the eagerness and sweetness of faith will depart from the hearts. Among them is

²¹⁷ 'I am a distributor and Allāh is the Bestower.' [Publisher]

²¹⁸ If faith ascends to the Pleiades it will be brought down by a man of Persia. [Publisher]

²¹⁹ 'It is We who determine its taking away.'—Al-Mu'minūn, 23:19 [Publisher]

the *Ḥadīth* that if faith will ascend to the Pleiades and will disappear from the earth, a man of the Persians will extend his hand and will bring it down. This *Ḥadīth* shows clearly that when ignorance, faithlessness and error, which are described as smoke in the other *Aḥādīth*, will become widespread and true faith will become so rare as if it had been drawn up to the skies, and the Holy Qur'ān will be abandoned as if it had been raised towards God Almighty, at that time, a man of Persia will take hold of the faith from the Pleiades and will descend with it to the earth. Be sure, therefore, that he is the son of Mary who was to descend.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 452-456*]

Verities of the Holy Qur'ān in This Age

I was young and am now old and people can bear witness that I never concerned myself with worldly affairs and was always interested in matters of the faith. I have found the Word which is called the Qur'ān of the utmost holiness and full of spiritual wisdom. It does not deify any man and does not bring God into contempt by excluding souls and bodies from His creation. The Holy Qur'ān in the end brings down that blessing on the heart of man for which a religion is embraced and makes him the heir of Divine grace. Then having found a light, how shall we revert to darkness and having eyes how shall we become blind?

[*Sanātan Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, p. 474*]

It is well established that the Holy Qur'ān has duly perfected the faith, as it affirms itself:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَارَضْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا²²⁰

This day have I perfected your religion for you and have completed My favour unto you, and am pleased to choose Islām as your faith.

Thus there is no need for any other book after the Holy Qur'ān, for it sets out all that is needed by man. Now **only the door of converse with God** is open, but not automatically. True and holy words which are obviously charged with Divine help and comprise many hidden matters, are acquired after the purification of the soul only through following the Holy Qur'ān and obeying the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, p. 80]

For every revelation the way of Allāh which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, is the guide, guardian and leader. It is not possible that any revelation should be vouchsafed contrary to this way, for that would amount to falsifying Holy Scriptures.

[Majmū'a Ishtihārāt, Vol. 2, p. 84]

The clear miracle of the Holy Qur'ān which can manifest itself to every people and by presenting which we can silence everyone, whether an Indian, Persian, European or American, is the unlimited treasury of insights, verities and wisdoms, which are expounded in every age according to its need and stand as armed soldiers to refute the thinking of every age. If the Holy Qur'ān had been limited in its verities and insights, it would not have amounted to a perfect miracle. Beauty of composition is not a matter the miraculous nature of which can be appreciated by every literate and illiterate person. The clear

²²⁰ Al-Mā'idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

miracle of the Holy Qur'ān is the unlimited insights and fine points which it comprises. A person who does not admit this miracle of the Holy Qur'ān is altogether deprived of the knowledge of the Qur'ān. *He who does not believe in this miracle does not estimate the Qur'ān as highly as it should be estimated, and does not recognize God as He should be recognized, and does not honour the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] as he should be honoured.*

Bear it in mind that the miracle of unlimited insights and verities which are contained in the Holy Qur'ān has accomplished more in every age than has the sword. All the doubts that every age raises according to its circumstances, and all the claims of superior insights that are put forward, are completely refuted by the Holy Qur'ān. No Brahmū Samājist, Buddhist, Āryā or any other philosopher can put forward a Divine verity which is not already comprised in the Holy Qur'ān. The wonders of the Qur'ān will never cease. As the wonderful qualities of the book of nature have never come to an end in any previous age, but appear ever fresh and new, the same is the case with this Holy Book, so that the word of God and the work of God should be proved to be in accord.

As I have written before, very often the wonders of the Holy Qur'ān are revealed to me and are such that they are not to be found in the commentaries. For instance, it has been revealed to me that the period that elapsed between the creation of Adam and the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is mentioned in *Sūrah Al-'Aşr* in the value of its letters and amounts to 4,740 lunar years. This fine point which discloses the miracle of the Holy Qur'ān is not mentioned in

any commentary. In the same way, God Almighty has disclosed to me that the meaning of:

إِنَّمَا أَنزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ²²¹

is not only that the Qur'ān was revealed in a blessed night, but that it also has another meaning which I have set out in my booklet *Fath-e-Islām*. Which commentary mentions all these verities? It should be borne in mind that a multiplicity of meanings of the Holy Qur'ān does not create any contradiction, nor import any defect in the guidance of the Qur'ān. Indeed the light of the greatness of the Qur'ān is enhanced by the addition of one light to another. Since time on account of limitless changes gives rise to limitless ideas, as a matter of course, it is necessary for the Holy Qur'ān to manifest itself in ever new forms, to disclose ever new knowledge, and to refute all innovations and novelties. In these circumstances, if a Book which claims to be *Khātam-ul-Kutub* were not to meet new contingencies, it would not establish its claim. If this Book comprises everything that is needed in every age, we would have to confess that it comprehends unlimited insights, and that it takes care of the needs of every age.

It should also be remembered that the way of Allāh with every perfect recipient of revelation has been that the hidden wonders of the Qur'ān are revealed to him. It often happens that a verse of the Holy Qur'ān is conveyed to the mind of a recipient of revelation and its purpose is something different from its original meaning. Maulavī 'Abdullāh Ghaznavī has written in a letter that on one

²²¹ 'We sent it down on the Night of Destiny.'—Al-Qadr, 97:2
[Publisher]

occasion he received the revelation:

قلنا يا نار كوني برداً وسلاماً²²²

but that he could not comprehend its import. He then received the revelation:

قلنا يا صبر كوني برداً وسلاماً²²³

Then he understood that in his case fire had meant steadfastness.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 255-262]

This is an age in which thousands of objections and doubts have been raised and Islām has been attacked from many directions. God Almighty has said:

وَإِنْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا عِنْدَنَا خَزَائِنُهُ وَمَا نُنْزِلُهُ إِلَّا بِقَدَرٍ مَعْلُومٍ²²⁴

There is not a thing but We have unlimited treasures thereof, and We send them down in regulated and known quantities.

Thus, this was the age of the disclosure of spiritual and temporal verities that are hidden in the Qur'ān which refute and reject every kind of philosophical and un-philosophical faith, for they could not be disclosed without their need having arisen. Now that attacks were made by the new philosophy, the time came for the manifestation of those insights. It was not possible that without the manifestation of those insights, Islām could be victorious against all false religions. A victory by the sword means nothing and is wiped out by the decline of temporary

²²² 'We said: O fire be cool and a means of peace and security.'
[Publisher]

²²³ 'We said: O steadfastness be cool and a means of peace and security.' [Publisher]

²²⁴ Al-Ḥijr, 15:22 [Publisher]

power. True and real victory is that which is achieved with an army of insights and verities. This is the victory that Islām is now achieving. This prophecy related to this age and it was so understood in the past. This is an age that demands that the Holy Qur'ān should disclose all the meanings which are hidden in it

An intelligent person can easily understand that no creation of God the Glorious is without fine and wonderful qualities. If one carries out a research till the Day of Judgement into the qualities and wonders of a fly, they would not come to an end. Then are not the wonders and qualities of the Holy Qur'ān even as many as those of a fly? Without doubt, those wonders are in excess of the total wonders of the whole of creation and to deny them would be to deny the Divine origin of the Holy Qur'ān for there is nothing in the world which proceeds from God Almighty and does not comprise unlimited wonders

The verities and fine points which foster understanding are always disclosed according to need. New corruptions call for ever fresh meanings, which are full of wisdom. It is obvious that the Holy Qur'ān is a miracle in itself, and the greatness of its miracle is that it is comprehensive of unlimited verities, but they are manifested at their due time. As the difficulties of the time demand, those hidden insights are disclosed. Look! secular knowledge, most of which is opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and is so misleading, is spreading rapidly. Currently, wonderful changes are being brought about in mathematics, physics and philosophy. Was it not necessary that at such a time the door to progress in faith and understanding should also have

been opened, so that facilities might become available for repelling every new mischief? Know it for certain then that the door has been opened and God Almighty has determined to disclose the hidden wonders of the Holy Qur'ān to the arrogant philosophers of the world. Half-baked Mullāhs, who are the enemies of Islām, cannot frustrate this design. If they do not desist from mischief, they will be destroyed and visited by such Divine wrath that will grind them to dust. These fools do not apprehend the prevailing circumstances. They desire that the Holy Qur'ān should appear as defeated, weak, small and insignificant, but it will now march forward like a champion. It will roar like a lion and devour the entire worldly philosophy and shall demonstrate its own supremacy and fulfil the prophecy:

لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ ۚ

and culminate in the spiritual fulfilment of the following prophecy:

وَلَيَكْمِلَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ

It is not possible to establish faith in the world to its perfection by means of compulsion. Faith is established upon the earth when no other faith remains standing in opposition to it and all opponents lay down their arms. That time has now arrived and cannot be blocked by the ignorant Mullāhs. Now the son of Mary, whose spiritual father is none other than the True Teacher, who also resembles Adam on this account, will distribute Qur'ānic

²²⁵ '....that He may cause it to prevail over all religions.'—Al-Şaff, 61:10; This verse also appears in Al-Tauba, 9:33 and in Al-Fath, 48:29. [Publisher]

²²⁶ 'He will surely establish for them their religion.'—Al-Nūr, 24:56 [Publisher]

treasures among the people, so much so, that the people will become satiated and will be unable to accept more, and everyone will have had his fill according to his capacity.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 3, pp. 464-467]

Comprehensiveness of the Holy Qur'ān

The holy and perfect teaching is that of the Holy Qur'ān which nourishes every branch of the human tree. The Qur'ān **does not stress only one side**. Sometimes it urges forgiveness and forbearance on condition that they should be appropriate, and sometimes on proper occasions, it directs the punishment of an offender. In truth the Holy Qur'ān is a picture of the Divine law of nature, which is visible everywhere. It is perfectly reasonable that the word of God and the work of God should be in accord with each other, that is to say, as the work of God Almighty appears in the world, the true Book of God should teach in accordance with that work, and not that His work should manifest one thing and His word should manifest something else. We observe in God's work that there is not always forgiveness and forbearance but that He punishes offenders with diverse types of chastisement. Such punishment is mentioned in the previous Books also. Our God is not only Compassionate but is also Wise and His torment is great. The True Book is the one which is in accord with this law of nature, and the True Word of God is that which is not inconsistent with His work. We do not find that God has treated His creation always with compassion and forbearance and that there is no chastisement. Even today, God Almighty has, for the chastisement of the wicked, prophesied through me the occurrence of a great and terrible earthquake

which will destroy them.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 20, pp. 346-347]

We had raised an objection to the current Gospels that the Gospels do not provide for the development of all man's faculties and that even the portions of them relating to moral qualities are taken from the Torah. This caused great humiliation to the Christian priests. To this some Christians replied that:

Divine Books are concerned only with morals and that the punishment of offences is not appropriate for a Book of God, inasmuch as offences should be punished according to changing circumstances which are unlimited and it is not proper that there should be a fixed law laying down penalties. Every penalty should be such as is in accord with the times and is helpful for the warning and restraint of offenders. Fixed penalties are not beneficial for the reform of people. In the same way, civil, criminal and revenue laws should not be fixed and rigid, as they would create difficulties under changing circumstances. For instance, they might adversely affect commercial conditions which have become current and cannot be avoided, or a penal law might not be helpful where offenders have become accustomed to one kind of punishment, or may not be amenable to it.

I would say that this type of thinking proceeds from people who have not studied the Holy Qur'ān with care. The directions contained in the Holy Qur'ān with regard to civil, criminal and revenue matters are of two types. One, which lays down the details of punishment or of procedure, and the other which only prescribes the principle and does not lay down any specific direction. The purpose of the latter is to provide guidance for the meeting of new circumstances. For instance, at one place the Holy Qur'ān lays down the rule of a tooth for a tooth and an

eye for an eye. This is a detail. In another place, the principle is set forth:

227 ﴿كَذَٰلِكَ سَيَجْزِيكَ سَيِّئَةُ مَا كُنتَ تَعْمَلُ﴾

On reflection we find that this principle is laid down for the widening of the law in cases where the specific law cannot be carried into effect. For instance, if a person who has lost his own teeth breaks the tooth of another, he ceases to be amenable to the rule of a tooth for a tooth, for he has no teeth himself. In the same way, if a blind person should destroy the eye of another person, he cannot be deprived of his own eye, for he has none. The Holy Qur'ān lays down general principles to meet such cases and by doing so encourages everyone to deduce rules suitable to every case. It is a pity that the Torah does not follow this method and the Gospel is wholly deprived of this teaching. It only lays down a few moral exhortations, but they are not part of any code or system of law. The statement of the Christians that the Gospel has left legal matters to the intelligence of people is not a matter of pride, but one of remorse and shame, for whatever is not laid down as universal law and is not spelled out in terms of any regulatory principles, is liable to be misused and become an evil, however good its purpose might be.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 87-88]

God Almighty, Who knows the secrets of the hearts, is witness that if anyone is able to point out a defect in the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān to the extent of a thousandth part of a particle, or is able to point out an excellence in

²²⁷ 'The penalty for an offence is chastisement in proportion thereto.'—Al-Shūrā, 42:41 [Publisher]

his own book, which is opposed to the teaching of the Qur'ān and excels it, we would be prepared to submit ourselves to the penalty of death.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 p. 298, sub footnote 2]

Holy Qur'ān Accords with Human Nature

Of all the current revealed Books on earth, the Holy Qur'ān is the only Book which is conclusively proven to be the Word of God. Its teachings for salvation are based entirely on truth and are in accordance with human nature. Its doctrines are so perfect and firm that strong proofs bear witness to their truth. Its commandments are based upon truth. Its teachings are free from every type of polytheism, innovation and worship of creatures. It is full of eagerness for the manifestation of the Unity of God and of Divine greatness and of the perfection of the Lord of Honour. It is replete throughout with the Unity of the Divine and does not tolerate any kind of deficiency or defect or unworthy attributes in the case of the Creator. It does not impose any doctrine by mere authority, but sets down reasons for the truth of that which it teaches. It establishes every purpose with proofs and arguments. It sets forth reasons for the truth of every principle and carries the mind to perfect certainty and full understanding. It repels all evils that afflict people's doctrines, actions and words, and works with bright reasoning. It teaches good manners, the knowledge of which is necessary for every human being. It repels every corruption with as much force as that which inspires the corruption. Its teaching is straightforward and strong and secure, as if it were a mirror of the law of nature and is a true reflection of it. It is an enlightening sun for the insight of the heart. It expounds the details of the principles of reason and

corrects its deficiencies.

Other books that are called revealed are in their present condition deprived of all these perfect qualities and contain many wrong conceptions with regard to the Being and attributes of the Divine. The followers of these books profess strange doctrines. Some of them deny God being the Creator and All-Powerful and set themselves up as His partners in being eternal and self-existent. Some set up idols and images and deities as partners with the Divine and managers of His kingdom. Some fashion sons and daughters and grandsons and grand-daughters for Him. Some worship Him in the form of an alligator or tortoise. In short, they run ahead of each other as if the Perfect Being is most unfortunate that He has not been able to attain the perfection which reason demanded for Him. When I discovered people involved in such false doctrines and afflicted with so much error my heart trembled and melted and I felt it a bounden duty and obligation to write this book for their guidance, which I shall fully discharge.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 81-83]

Evidences of Truth and Superiority of the Holy Qur'ān

The external evidence of the truth and superiority of the Holy Qur'ān is of four types. One, that is derived from those matters which need to be reformed; and second, that is derived from those matters which need to be perfected; and third, which is derived from matters which manifest the power of God; and fourth, which is derived from matters relating to the unseen. The internal evidence of the truth and superiority of the Holy Qur'ān is

all derived from matters manifesting the Power of God.

Matters that need to be reformed are false doctrines which people have adopted in place of true doctrines and righteous action, and which have become so widespread that Divine favour should address itself to their reform.

Matters that need to be perfected relate to the teachings which are found in a defective condition in all revealed books, and whose defectiveness and imperfection are manifested by comparison with perfect teachings and which, therefore, demand a revealed Book which should perfect them.

Matters which Manifest the Power of God are of two kinds. One, external, by which are meant matters which are created by God without any human planning and which invest every particle with that majesty, dignity and greatness, the acquisition of which is impossible according to reason and the like of which is not to be found anywhere in the world.

Secondly, internal. By these are meant those beauties of form and meaning of the revealed Book which cannot be matched by human faculties and which, by being in fact matchless and peerless, point to a Unique and All-Powerful One and are thus a mirror pointing to God.

By **matters relating to the unseen** are meant matters which proceed from the tongue of a person with regard to whom it is certain that their exposition is beyond his power. That is to say, by comparing them with the circumstances of that person it becomes obvious that they are neither natural to him nor could have been acquired by observation or reflection; nor should it be possible to imagine that he could have obtained knowledge of them from one who was familiar with them. They may not be matters which are beyond the power of

matters which are beyond the power of another person. Thus they are relative matters, that is to say, when they are attributed to some particular person they can be considered as relating to unseen and when they are attributed to some other persons they have not this quality.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 143-145]

Miracles of the Holy Qur'ān

Some of the miracles and prophecies of the Holy Qur'ān are such that they can be witnessed and experienced by us even in this age and no one can deny them.

The miracle of the sign of chastisement which was shown to the disbelievers of that time is a sign to which we are also witness, the reason being that it is the necessary consequence of premises that are certain and which cannot be denied by anyone. The first premise is that this sign was demanded when the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and his few companions were being persecuted in diverse ways in Mecca.

That was a time of such weakness for Islām that the disbelievers of Mecca mocked at the Muslims and said: If you are right, then how is it that you are suffering so much at our hands and God, upon Whom you rely, does not help you and why are you so small in numbers that you will be soon destroyed? If you are in the right why are we not chastised? What was said to the disbelievers in reply is set out in the Holy Qur'ān at diverse places and that constitutes the second premise for the appreciation of the grandeur of this prophecy. That was a time when the lives of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and his companions were always in danger and failure stared them in the face in all directions. At such a time, in answer to the demand of the

disbelievers for a sign of chastisement, it was stated plainly that they would soon be shown the sign of the victory of Islām and their own punishment. It was said that Islām, which appeared as a seed at the time, would one day manifest itself as a large tree and that those who demand a sign of chastisement will one day be put to the sword and the whole of Arabia would be cleared of disbelievers. The sovereignty over Arabia would pass to the Muslims and God Almighty would so firmly establish Islām in Arabia that idol worship would be abolished forever and the state of fear of the Muslims would be replaced by security. Islām would grow strong and would become supreme till other countries would fall under the shadow of its victory which would extend to far regions and a great kingdom would be established which would endure till the end of the world.

If a person considers both these premises and finds out that the time when this prophecy was made was a time of great distress for Islām, and the prophecy that was made was altogether opposed to the prevailing circumstances and appeared wholly impossible, and then looks at the history of Islām, which is well known to enemies and friends, and sees how clearly it was fulfilled and how its fulfilment awed the hearts and how it was manifested with full power and strength in the east and the west, he would appreciate it as a miracle witnessed by himself regarding which he would have no doubt whatever left.

The second miracle of the Holy Qur'ān which we can appreciate as eye witnesses, is the wonderful changes that were manifested in the companions of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] through the blessing of the following of the Holy Qur'ān and the

effect of the company of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. When we see what kind of people they were before they embraced Islām and what were their ways and habits, and then in consequence of keeping company with the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and following the Holy Qur'ān, how they changed from their low condition into a clean and pure condition in their beliefs, their morals, their conduct, their conversation, their behaviour and all their ways, we would have to confess that this great change, which invested their rusted personalities with a wonderful freshness and bestowed upon them light and brightness, was an extraordinary transformation brought about by the hand of God Almighty....This transformation was so extraordinary as to deserve being called a miracle.

A third miracle of the Holy Qur'ān which is present before our eyes is its verities, insights and fine points with which its eloquent composition is replete. This miracle has been set forth very forcefully in the Holy Qur'ān. It is said that, if all men, high and low, were to combine together to produce its like, it would not be possible for them to do so.²²⁸ This miracle is proved by the fact that during the last 1,300 years, although the Holy Qur'ān has been very widely published and challenges are being hurled right and left, yet no one has ever dared to take up the challenge. This proves clearly that all human faculties are unable to compete with the Holy Qur'ān.

Even if out of the hundreds of excellences of the Holy Qur'ān, only one is put forward and its match is de-

²²⁸ The reference is to Banī Isrā'īl, 17:89. (Ed.)

manded, it is impossible for any human being to put forward the like of it. For instance, one of the excellences of the Holy Qur'ān is that it comprises all religious insights and there is no religious verity related to truth and wisdom which is not found in the Holy Qur'ān. Is there anyone who can put forward any other book which has this quality? If anyone doubts the fact that the Holy Qur'ān is comprehensive of all religious verities, then such a doubter, whether Christian, Āryā, Brahmū or atheist, can satisfy himself by examining the matter in his own way and we take the responsibility of satisfying him, provided he turns to us as a seeker after truth. All the holy verities that are contained in the Bible, or the words of truth and wisdom which we have seen in the books of philosophers, or the verities that have found place by chance in the Vedās or are still to be found in them which we have seen, or the wisdom and understanding which are set out in the hundreds of books of the Ṣufīs, which we have come to know, are all found in the Holy Qur'ān.

This perfect research which we have carried out in depth during thirty years has disclosed to us conclusively and certainly, that there is no spiritual verity which is helpful for the perfection of the soul and for the training of intellect and the heart which is not mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān. This is not only our experience, but is the claim of the Holy Qur'ān, which has been tested not only by me, but by thousands of divines from the very beginning who have borne witness to its truth.

A fourth miracle of the Holy Qur'ān is its spiritual effects which have been inherent in it from the beginning. This means that its followers are accepted of the Divine

and are honoured with the converse of God. Their supplications are accepted by God Almighty, and He responds to them with love and mercy, and He informs them of some hidden mysteries as He informs the Prophets and distinguishes them from other people by bestowing upon them signs of His support and help. This is also a sign which will continue till the Day of Judgement among the Muslims. It has been manifested throughout and is present even today. There are today among the Muslims people whom God the Glorious, through His special support, honours with true revelation and visions relating to hidden matters.

O ye who are seekers after truth! and O ye who are hungry and thirsty for true signs!! consider justly and with a pure vision of what high degree are the signs which God Almighty has set forth in the Holy Qur'ān and how they are present and perceptible in every age. The miracles of previous Prophets are now mere stories and we do not know to what degree they are true.

[Taṣḍīq-un-Nabī, pp. 20-23 or Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmadiyya, Vol. 3, pp. 49-53]

The miracles and extraordinary signs of the Holy Qur'ān are of four types; (1) miracles relating to the intellect; (2) miracles relating to knowledge; (3) miracles relating to spiritual blessings; and (4) miracles relating to external causes.

The first three are miracles of the inherent qualities of the Holy Qur'ān. They are very grand and are susceptible of obvious proof. They can be witnessed in every age like visible realities, but the fourth kind are external matters which are not inherent in the Holy Qur'ān. Of these is the miracle of the splitting of the moon. The true excellence and beauty of the Holy Qur'ān are exhibited in the first

three kinds of miracles. Indeed, this is the great sign of all Divine words that these three kinds of miracles should be found in them. In the Holy Qur'ān all three are found in a high and perfect and complete degree, and they are put forward by the Holy Qur'ān repeatedly as proof of its being matchless and peerless, as it is said:

قُلْ لِّئِنْ اجْتَمَعَتِ الْأَرْضُ وَالْجِبُّ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنِ
لَا يَأْتُوا بِمِثْلِهِ وَلَوْ كَانَ بَعْضُهُمْ لِبَعْضٍ ظَهِيرًا²²⁹

Proclaim to these disbelievers that if all humans and ge-nii, that is, the entire creation, were to agree to produce the like of this Qur'ān, they would not be able to produce a book which combines the internal and external qualities of the Holy Qur'ān even though they all help each other in the effort.

At another place it is said:

مَا قَرَأْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ²³⁰

In other words:

يَسْأَلُوا أَصْحَابَ الْمُنْجَزِ ۖ فِيهَا كُتِبَ الْقِسْمَةُ²³¹

The Holy Qur'ān comprises the sum and substance of all divine scriptures.

.... At another place it is said:

لَوْ أَنزَلْنَاهُ هَٰذَا الْقُرْآنَ عَلَىٰ جَبَلٍ لَّرَأَيْنَاهُ كَخَاشِعًا مُّتَصَدِّعًا مِّنْ خَشْيَةِ اللَّهِ
وَتِلْكَ الْأَمْثَالُ لَضَرِبُهَا لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَفَكَّرُونَ²³²

We have revealed this Qur'ān to you; had it been sent down on a mountain, it would have been rent asunder in

²²⁹ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:89 [Publisher]

²³⁰ 'Nothing have We left out in the Book (the Qur'ān).'—
Al-An'ām, 6:39 [Publisher]

²³¹ Al-Bayyinah, 98:3-4 [Publisher]

²³² Al-Ḥashr, 59:22 [Publisher]

fear and awe of Allāh. We narrate these illustrations so that people reflect upon the grandeur of the Word of God.

.... Besides this, large numbers of miracles of external changes are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān. Miracles of this kind are like ornaments for the beauty of the Qur'ān with which handsome people are bedecked. It is obvious that what is beautiful in itself does not need any ornament though an ornament enhances its beauty to some degree.

These miracles that are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān are of diverse types. One is that through the prayer of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] God Almighty manifested His powerful control over the heavens and split the moon into two pieces. Secondly, the change that God Almighty brought about on earth through the prayers of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] which appeared in the form of a famine that lasted for seven years, whereby people were so overcome that they ground down bones and swallowed them. Thirdly, the miraculous control that was exercised on the day of the migration of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] to safeguard him against the mischief of the disbelievers. When the disbelievers of Mecca resolved to kill him, God, the Glorious, informed the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] of their design and commanded him to migrate from Mecca to Medina and gave him the good news of his victorious return. It was a Wednesday, the time was around midday, and the day was very hot, when this trial was manifested by God. In this situation of distress when the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of

Allāh be on him] was about to leave his home town suddenly, and his enemies had surrounded his house with the design of killing him, a close relative whose being was compounded of love and faith laid himself down, under the direction of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] on his bed, covering his face so that the spies of the enemies should not investigate the departure of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and deeming the substitute to be the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] himself should continue to wait for killing him.

کس بہر کسے سر نہ ہد جاں نقشاند
عشق است کہ ایں کار بصد صدق کناند²³³

After the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had left, leaving his faithful relative in his place, and his enemies discovered his departure, these wicked people pursued him with the intention of killing him somewhere on the way. At that time of distress, the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was accompanied only by one sincere and faithful friend. But as ever, and also in the course of that dangerous journey, his Lord was with him, Who had sent this perfect and faithful servant of His into the world for carrying out a grand reform. In order to safeguard this dear servant of His, He exercised wonderful control in many ways which are mentioned briefly in the Holy Qur'ān. One of them was that none of his enemies noticed his departure though it was morning time and his enemies were surrounding his house. As is mentioned in *Sūrah Yāsīn*, God

²³³ No one offers his head, or sacrifices his life for someone else. Love alone makes one perform this task with utmost sincerity.

Almighty put a covering on the eyes of all those wretches and the Holy Prophet^{SA} left unnoticed.

Another extraordinary manifestation that God, the Glorious, exhibited for safeguarding His immaculate Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was that, though his enemies arrived outside the cave in which the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was hidden with his companion, they could not see him for God Almighty had sent a pair of pigeons which built a nest the same night at the entrance to the cave and also laid their eggs there and by Divine command a spider also wove its web at the place, whereby the enemies of the Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] were misled and returned frustrated. Another miracle that occurred was that an opponent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who was riding a horse on the way to Medina, tried to approach the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and through the latter's prayer the hooves of his horse sank into the earth and he fell down, whereupon he asked for forgiveness of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and turned away. Another miraculous event that occurred was that when being provoked by their failure, his enemies advanced against the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] with a large army so that they might destroy the Muslims, who were small in number, and thus root out Islām, God, the Glorious, created confusion among the enemy forces at Badr in consequence of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] throwing a handful of gravel at his enemies, and thus brought about their defeat. God Almighty caused this handful of gravel to make the enemy leaders blind and confused them and rooted

them to the earth and made them fall down dead at the spots which the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had specified in advance.

The Holy Qur'ān mentions several other instances of Divine intervention and succour, that were miraculous in nature. The sum and substance of this is that God Almighty raised the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] at a time when he was poor, an orphan, alone and helpless and then within a short period of time, which was even less than thirty years, made him victorious over a large part of the world and made him supreme over the Byzantine emperor and the kings of Syria, Egypt, and the countries between the Tigris and the Euphrates. Similarly, within a short period of time, He spread the Muslim victories as far as the Oxus river. The Holy Qur'ān had foretold the spread of Islām in these countries. Considering the Muslims' lack of resources and their wonderful victories, wise and learned Europeans have testified that there is no other instance in the history of the world of such rapid advance as that of Islām and the Islāmic kingdom. It is obvious that what is matchless is also called miraculous. In short, many external changes of a miraculous nature are mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān. Indeed, every part of this holy word announces aloud instances of Divine support.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 60-67, footnote]

Doors to Divine Understanding Opened by the Holy Qur'ān

The Holy Qur'ān opens three doors for bestowing the understanding of truth. One is the door of reason. The way of reasoning has been perfectly employed for the

recognition of the existence of God and His attributes of Creation, Unity, Power, Compassion and Self-Subsistence. In the course of this reasoning logic and eloquence, physics and medicine, astronomy and mathematics, philosophy and the method of debate, have all been brought into play most appropriately whereby difficult problems have been resolved. This method is extraordinary and is a miracle of reasoning. Great philosophers who invented logic and laid down the rules of philosophy and occupied themselves much with physics and astronomy were not able, on account of the deficiency of their reason, to employ this learning in support of their faith. Nor were they able to correct their own mistakes or to confer any religious benefit upon others. Indeed most of them remained atheists or heretics or weak of faith, and those of them who believed in God Almighty to some degree mixed up error and truth and compounded the impure with the pure and thus went astray. It is thus miraculous that this Divine reasoning commits no mistake and has employed the learnings that we have mentioned for such a high purpose as no human being has attempted. It is enough proof that the statements of the Holy Qur'ān with regard to the existence of the Divine and His attributes of Unity and Creation and other perfect attributes, are so comprehensive that they cannot be exceeded, nor is it possible for any man to put forth a new argument. If anyone doubts this, let him put forward some intellectual reasoning in support of the existence or the Unity or Creativeness or any other Divine attribute, so that we might point out from the Holy Qur'ān the same arguments or even better ones for which we make ourselves responsible. This claim and this praise of the Qur'ān are not mere words, but are true in

fact, and no one can put forward an argument in support of the true doctrine which the Holy Qur'ān has not put forward. The Holy Qur'ān at many places loudly claims perfect comprehensiveness for itself

The second door of Divine understanding which the Holy Qur'ān has opened wide, is intellectual fine points which on account of their extraordinary nature could be called intellectual miracles. They are of many types. First, the knowledge of the insights of the faith, that is to say, all high insights in the matter of faith and all its holy verities and all the fine points of the knowledge of the Divine which are needed in this world for the perfection of the soul are fully set out in the Holy Qur'ān; so also, all the illnesses of the self that incite to sin and its passions and all the remedies and requirements that are needed and all the ways of the purification of the soul and all the signs and characteristics and essentials and high moral qualities are fully dealt with. No one can set forth a verity or Divine point or a way of reaching God or a rare or holy discipline or form of Divine worship which is not mentioned in the Qur'ān. Secondly, there is knowledge of the qualities of the soul and of psychology which is found in such a comprehensive way in this miraculous Word that those who reflect can appreciate that this is not the work of any except the All-Powerful. Thirdly, there is the knowledge of the beginning, of the hereafter, and other hidden matters which are an essential part of the word of the Knower of the hidden, which comforts the hearts and proves the knowledge of the hidden possessed by the All-Powerful God. This knowledge is found in such detail and abundance in the Holy Qur'ān that no other book can compare with it in this respect. Besides this, the Holy Qur'ān has also pressed into the service of the faith

knowledge of other subjects, in a miraculous manner. In this respect it has kept in mind logic, physics, philosophy, astronomy, psychology, medicine, mathematics, and the knowledge of composition, and has used them for expounding and explaining the knowledge of the faith, or facilitating its understanding, or for drawing any conclusion from it or repelling the objection of some ignorant person. In short, all these subjects are set out in the Holy Qur'ān for the service of the faith in such an extraordinary manner that every type of intellect can derive benefit from them....

The third door of the understanding of the Divine which the Holy Qur'ān has opened is the door of spiritual blessings which can be called its miracle of effect. Every intelligent person knows that the country of the birth of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was a limited peninsula called Arabia, which was cut off from all other countries. Even a bigoted opponent, who has some knowledge, cannot deny that before the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] the people of this country led a wild and animal existence and were entirely unaware of religion, or faith, or the rights of God, or the rights of man, and that through the centuries they had been steeped in idol worship and other impure notions, and had reached the extremes of debauchery, drinking, gambling and other vices, and did not regard theft, robbery, murder, infanticide, devouring the substance of orphans or trespassing against the rights of others as a sin. In short, every vicious condition and every type of darkness and heedlessness enveloped the hearts of the Arabs. Then, it is also known that the same ignorant and wild and impious people embraced Islām and accepted the Holy

Qur'ān and were completely changed. The effectiveness of the Divine Word and the companionship of the Immaculate Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] so changed their hearts suddenly within a short time, that after their period of ignorance they were enriched with the insights of faith, and abandoning the love of the world, they were so lost in the love of God that they abandoned their homes and dear ones, and their honour and comforts for the sake of winning the pleasure of Allāh, the Glorious.

Both these pictures of their original condition and of the new life, which they acquired after their embracing Islām, are set out so clearly in the Holy Qur'ān that a righteous and good-hearted person's eyes are filled with tears at reading the account. What was it then which pulled them away from one world into another so rapidly? There were two things; one was that that immaculate Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was most effective in his holy power such as never was nor will be. Secondly, it was the mighty and wonderful effect of the Holy Word of the absolutely Powerful, Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting God, which pulled a large population out of thousands of darknesses into the light. Without doubt, this effect of the Holy Qur'ān is miraculous for no one can cite another instance in the world that a book had proved so effective. Who can give proof that another book brought about such a change and such reform as was brought about by the Holy Qur'ān?

....

Hundreds of thousands of the holy ones testify that by following the Holy Qur'ān, Divine blessings descend upon the heart and a wonderful relationship is established

with the Divine. Divine lights and revelation descend upon the hearts, and insights and fine points issue from mouths. They are bestowed a strong trust and a firm certainty and the delicious love of God, which is nurtured by the delight of meeting, is generated in their hearts. If their beings are ground down in the mortar of calamities and are squeezed in powerful presses, their essence would be found only to be the love of God. The world is unaware of them and they are far above and higher than the world. The treatment accorded to them by God is miraculous. It has been disclosed to them that God does exist; and that He is One. When they pray to Him, He hears them; and when they call on Him, He responds to them. When they seek refuge with Him, He runs to them. He loves them more than a father. He rains down blessings on their homes. They are recognized by His overt and covert and spiritual and material support. He helps them in every field for they are His and He is theirs. These things are not without proof.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 2, pp. 72-79, footnote]

Guidance for the Righteous

Some Brahmū Samājists object that if perfect understanding depends upon the Qur'ān, then why did God not publish it in all countries and in all places of population, ancient and modern, and why did He deprive millions of His creatures of His perfect understanding and of true doctrine?

The reply is that this objection derives from short-sightedness If the light of the sun does not reach certain dark places or if some people shut their eyes like an owl on beholding the sun, would this mean that the sun has not been created by God? If the rain does not fall on

And again:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ
وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَإِنْ كَانُوا مِنْ قَبْلُ لَفِي ضَلَالٍ مُبِينٍ ۝ وَالْآخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ ۝ وَ
هُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ۝ ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ۝²³⁵

(Part Number: 28)

One should ponder over the first verse, namely:

اَللّٰهُ ۝ ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ لَا رَيْبَ ۤ فِيْهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِيْنَ ۝²³⁶

It will be observed how nicely, beautifully and succinctly God Almighty has furnished the answer to the objection raised. First reference is made to the Author of the Holy Qur'an and His Grandeur and Majesty are indicated. It is said:

اَللّٰهُ²³⁷

I am Allāh, Who knows best. That is to say, I, Who Am All-Knowing and All-Wise, Whose knowledge is not matched by the knowledge of anyone else, am revealing this Book.

Then the greatness of the Holy Qur'an is referred to and it is said:

ذٰلِكَ الْكِتٰبُ²³⁸

²³⁵ 'He it is Who has raised among the unlettered people a Messenger from among themselves who recites unto them His Signs, and purifies them, and teaches them the Book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance. And among others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise. That is Allāh's Grace; He bestows it on whom He pleases; and Allāh is the Master of immense grace.'—Al-Jumu'ah, 62:3-5 [Publisher]

²³⁶ 'Alif Lām Mīm [I am Allāh, the All-Knowing]. This is a perfect Book; there is no doubt in it; it is a guidance for the righteous.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:2-3 [Publisher]

²³⁷ Al-Baqarah, 2:2 [Publisher]

This is that Book. That is to say, **a grand and sublime Book which derives from Divine knowledge**. It is established with regard to it that its source and spring is the Eternal Being of the All-Wise.

By using the word “that”, which denotes distance, God Almighty has indicated that this Book derives from the knowledge of that Being with high attributes, Who is Matchless and Peerless and Whose perfect knowledge and profound mysteries are very far from the limits of human sight.

Then the praiseworthiness of its form and structure are described by saying:

لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ²³⁹

The body of the Qur’ān is so well reasoned that there is no room left in it for any kind of doubt;

meaning that, unlike other books, it is not a mere tale or story, but is comprehensive of conclusive arguments and reasoning, and sets forth clear proofs of its objects and purposes, and is in itself a **miracle** which operates like a sharp sword for the removal of doubts and suspicions, and does not leave the matter of the recognition of God at the conjectural stage of **He should be**, but carries the matter to the certainty of, **He is**.

Despite the grandeur of these purposes which are greatly concerned with effect and reform, it proceeds to define the **fourth purpose which is its ultimate object**, which is the provision of guidance for the righteous. It announces that it is:

²³⁸ Al-Baqarah, 2:3 [Publisher]

²³⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:3 [Publisher]

هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ²⁴⁰

This Book has been revealed for the guidance of those who, on account of their pure interiors, sane reason, firm intelligence, eagerness for search of truth, right motives, would, in the end, arrive at a high degree of faith and recognition of God and perfect righteousness.

In other words, those about whom God knows that their nature is suited to this guidance and they can make progress in true insights, will in the end be guided by this Book; and this Book would reach them and God would enable them to follow the right path before their death. Thus, God Almighty has clearly stated that those who in the knowledge of God are worthy of being guided and possess the quality of righteousness by their nature will surely be guided through the Holy Qur'ān.

The succeeding verses set forth the details and pronounce that:

Those who in the knowledge of God are likely to believe will all gradually believe, and only those will be left outside concerning whom God knows that they will not embrace Islām and, whether they are warned or not, they will not believe, or will not arrive at the perfect stage of righteousness and understanding²⁴¹.

Thus in these verses God Almighty has made it clear that only those can derive benefit from the guidance of the Qur'ān who are righteous and whose true nature is not overcome by any darkness of their ego

If it is asked what about the salvation of those who have

²⁴⁰ Al-Baqarah, 2:3 [Publisher]

²⁴¹ Al-Baqarah, 2:4-8 [Publisher]

had no access to a revealed Book, the answer is that if they are wholly wild and are deprived of human intelligence, they will not be called to account in any way. They are in the category of the insane. But those who possess some degree of intelligence, will be called to account according to the degree of their intelligence.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 198-203, footnote 11]

The seed of the Unity of God which the Holy Qur'ān has sown in Arabia, Persia, Egypt, Syria, India, China, Afghānistān, Kashmīr and other regions, and the manner in which it has rooted out from most places idol worship and the worship of creatures, is a matter which is not matched in any age. As a contrast, when we look at the Vedās, we find that they were not able to reform even Āryāvart itself.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, p. 77]

Be alert all the time and do not take a single step contrary to Divine teaching and the guidance of the Qur'ān. I tell you truly that anyone who evades the least one of the 700 commandments of the Qur'ān, shuts upon himself the door of salvation. The ways of true and perfect salvation have been opened by the Qur'ān and all the rest is its reflection. Therefore, study the Qur'ān with care and hold it very dear with a love that you have not for anything else. As God has said to me:

الخير كله فى القرآن²⁴²

This is wholly true. Those people are to be pitied who prefer anything else to it. The fountainhead of all your prosperity and salvation is the Holy Qur'ān. There is no religious need of yours which is not filled by the Qur'ān.

²⁴² All good is contained in the Qur'ān. [Publisher]

On the Day of Judgement, the Qur'ān will confirm or deny your faith. There is no other book under heaven beside the Qur'ān which can furnish you with salvation. God has been very Beneficent towards you that He has bestowed a Book like the Qur'ān upon you. I tell you truly that if the Book that is recited to you had been recited to the Christians, they would not have perished. If this bounty of guidance which has been bestowed upon you had been bestowed upon the Jews in place of the Torah, some of their sects would not have denied the Day of Judgement. Then value this favour that has been bestowed upon you. It is a very dear favour; it is great wealth. If the Qur'ān had not been revealed the whole world would have been left like a dirty lump of flesh. The Qur'ān is the Book in contrast with which all other guidance amounts to nothing.

[Kashtī Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 19, pp. 26-27]

In addition to all the excellences and beauties of style and idiom, the Holy Qur'ān is the compendium of wisdom and knowledge, and possesses such a spiritual effect that following it truly a person achieves prosperity, inner light and expansion of mind, and becomes accepted of God and worthy of being addressed by Him. The Holy Qur'ān creates in its follower those lights and hidden graces and provides him with such certain supports that are not found in others. He receives from God that delicious and comforting word in consequence of which he realizes more and more every moment that by the true following of the Holy Qur'ān and true obedience to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] he has arrived at a stage which is special for those whom God loves, and that he has been bestowed such Divine

pleasure and kindness, which had been bestowed upon all those of perfect faith who have passed on before him. He perceives not only in words, but as actual fact, a pure spring of all these loves flowing through his heart and observes such a condition of relationship with God in his open breast which he cannot describe in words or by means of any illustration. He observes Divine lights descending like rain upon his soul.

Those lights cast their reflection upon him sometimes in the form of the disclosure of hidden matters, sometimes in the form of knowledge and insights, and at other times in the form of high moral qualities. These effects of the Holy Qur'ān have been continuous. Ever since the sun of truth appeared in the world in the blessed person of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], thousands of people who possessed the capacity and the ability have arrived and continue to arrive at those high stages by following the Divine Word and obeying the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] that we have mentioned above. God Almighty bestows continuously such favours and exaltations on them and manifests such support and bounties for them, that those with clear eyesight recognize that they are accepted of God and that they are under a grand shadow of Divine kindness and enjoy a majestic Divine grace. Observers can see clearly that they are honoured with extraordinary bounties, distinguished with wonderful miracles, scented with the perfume of the love of God, and are invested with the pride of being accepted of God. The light of the All-Powerful so fills their company, their attention, their resolve, their prayer, their eyesight, their moral qualities, their way of living, their pleasure and their anger, their liking and their dislike, their movement and their rest,

their speech and their silence, and their exterior and their interior as a precious perfume fills a phial of transparent glass.

Those things are acquired through the grace of their companionship, attention and love, which cannot be acquired through the severest discipline. By entertaining goodwill and good faith for them, faith takes on another aspect, a new strength is gained for the display of good moral qualities, self-will and inclination towards disobedience begin to decline, and a satisfaction and a sweetness is gained. According to one's capacity and the degree of one's relationship, faith surges up, and affection and fondness manifest themselves, and delight in the remembrance of God increases.

By keeping company with them over a long period, one is brought to confess that in their strength of faith, and their moral conditions, their renunciation of the world, inclination towards God, love for God and kindness towards His creatures, and in their fidelity and steadfastness, they occupy such a high place as has no equal in the world. Sane reason immediately perceives that the shackles and chains which bind other people have been removed from their feet and their minds have been cleansed of the narrowness and constraint through which the minds of other people are constrained and fatigued. They are honoured by the frequency of converse with God and are considered worthy of being continuously addressed. They are considered a means of direction and guidance between God, the Glorious and High, and His eager servants. Their own brightness illuminates other hearts. As by the advent of spring there is an upsurge in vegetation, in the same way, by their advent,

natural light upsurges in obedient temperaments and every fortunate heart desires to make every effort to bring into manifestation its capacities for good fortune, and to be rid of heedlessness, and to be rescued from the darkness of sinfulness, disobedience, vice, ignorance and unawareness. During their blessed time, there is such spread of light that every believer and seeker after truth, according to the degree of his faith, discovers an expansion and fondness for religiosity without any apparent reason and perceives an increase and strengthening of resolve. In short, from their delicate perfume, which they acquire through the blessing of perfect obedience, every sincere person is benefited according to the degree of his sincerity.

It is true, however, that those who are eternally unfortunate, do not partake of it, but advance in rancour and envy and ill fortune and thus fall into hell. This refers to what God says:

خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ²⁴³

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 528-532, sub-footnote 3]

Bounties received by followers of Holy Qur'ān

The bounties that are bestowed upon the followers of the Holy Qur'ān and the special gifts that they receive are not capable of being expressed in words, but some of them are of such great magnitude that it would be proper to mention them in some detail for the guidance of seekers.

Of these are the knowledge and insights which are bestowed on perfect followers. When a person adopts true

²⁴³ 'Allāh has set a seal on their hearts.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:8 [Publisher]

obedience to the Holy Qur'ān, commits himself wholly to its commandments, reflects upon its guidance with perfect love and sincerity, and does not hold back in any respect, then his observation and reflection are bestowed a light, and he is equipped with a delicate sense of reason whereby he is informed of wonderful fine points of Divine knowledge, which are hidden in the Word of God. Fine insights descend upon his heart like heavy rain. These fine insights are given the name of wisdom in the Holy Qur'ān as is said:

يُؤْتِي الْحِكْمَةَ مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۚ وَمَنْ يُؤْتَ الْحِكْمَةَ فَقَدْ أُوتِيَ خَيْرًا كَثِيرًا²⁴⁴

God grants wisdom to whom He pleases, and whoever is granted wisdom has indeed been granted abundant good. That is, wisdom comprises abundant good; he who is granted wisdom, attains abundant good.

This knowledge and understanding, which are called wisdom, being comprehensive of abundant good, are like a vast ocean which is bestowed upon the followers of the Divine word. Their observation and reflection are so blessed that high verities are reflected in their souls, as in a mirror, and perfect truths are disclosed to them. Divine support furnishes them with such means at the time of every research that what they set forth does not remain incomplete or defective and contains no error. So the knowledge and insights and verities and fine points and arguments and proofs that occur to them are so perfect and complete that it is a matter above the ordinary and other people cannot match them. They do not arise of themselves in their minds, but they are guided to them by a hidden understanding and Divine support, and it is

²⁴⁴ Al-Baqarah, 2:270 [Publisher]

through the strength of that understanding that they alight upon the mysteries and lights of the Qur'ān, which cannot be acquired in the smoky light of reason alone. This knowledge and these insights that are bestowed upon them, and the fine points and deep insights relating to the Being and attributes of the Divine and to the life after death which are disclosed to them, are in their nature spiritual which in the estimation of the wise are higher and finer than material wonders.

In the estimation of the wise the value and rank of the men of God are determined by these extraordinary gifts. These are the ornaments of their high rank and are the beauty of their countenance. It is a part of human nature that the awe of knowledge and true insights affects it most, and truth and understanding are dearer to it than everything else. If it were supposed that a pious person is granted visions, is given knowledge of hidden matters, subjects himself to severe disciplines, and many extraordinary things are manifested by him, but that he is ignorant of the knowledge of the Divine so much so that he cannot distinguish between truth and falsehood, is caught in wrong thinking and incorrect doctrine, and is weak and liable to error in every matter, he would appear as base and contemptible in the estimation of every sane person. A person who smacks of ignorance in the estimation of a wise one, and is disliked by those who hear him utter stupid things, cannot be respected by a wise one and appears contemptible, however pious and devoted he might be. This shows that spiritual wonders, that is to say, knowledge of the Divine and insights, are a necessary characteristic of the men of God and are special conditions for the recognition of the great wonders of the faith.

These conditions are bestowed in a complete and perfect manner upon those who follow the Holy Qur'ān to the full. Despite the fact that many of them are not learned and are not well versed in current subjects, they are so much in advance of their contemporaries in fine points and knowledge of the Divine that very often their opponents are surprised on hearing their speeches, or on reading their writings, and are forced to confess that their knowledge and insights belong to another world and bear the colour of Divine support. One proof of this is that if anyone, who is opposed to them, seeks to compare their speeches on subjects relating to the Divine with anyone else's speech, he is forced to confess, provided he is just and honest, that truth resided in their speeches. As the discussion proceeds and becomes deeper, many fine arguments emerge which would establish their being in the right, like a bright day. We are ready ourselves to furnish proof of this to every seeker after truth.

Another of these bounties is sinlessness, which is also termed Divine protection. This is also bestowed on the perfect followers of the Holy Qur'ān as an extraordinary gift. By sinlessness, we mean that they are safeguarded against undesirable habits, thoughts, morals and actions in which other people are involved day and night. If they happen to make a slip Divine mercy soon sets them right. It is obvious that the station of sinlessness is very delicate and is altogether at a distance from the demands of the self that incites to evil, and that its acquisition is not possible without special Divine attention. For instance, if an average person is asked that he should absolutely avoid telling a lie in every one of his affairs, statements, professions and occupations, it becomes difficult and impossible for him. Even if he makes every effort to-

wards this, he is met with so many obstructions that in the end it becomes his principle that in the affairs of the world it is impossible to avoid falsehood. But for those fortunate ones, who seek to follow the guidance of the Holy Qur'ān with true love and eager determination, not only is it made easy that they should avoid telling lies, but they are also granted strength to give up everything undesirable. God Almighty, by His perfect mercy, safeguards them on all ill occasions that would lead them to ruin, for they are the light of the world and in their security lies the security of the world, and their ruin means the ruin of the world. For this reason they are safeguarded in respect of every thought, knowledge and understanding, wrath and passion, fear and greed, constriction and prosperity, joy and sorrow, and hardship and ease, from all unworthy actions, corrupt thoughts, wrong knowledge, improper conduct, misguided reflections and every excess of their ego. They do not take their stand on anything undesirable, for God Almighty makes Himself responsible for their training and whenever He observes a dry branch in their pure tree, He cuts it off with His benevolent hand. Divine support watches over them every moment. This bounty of protection which is bestowed upon them is also not without proof. An intelligent person can satisfy himself in respect of it after keeping company with them for a short while.

Another great bounty is trust in God on which they are firmly established. This pure spring is not available to anyone besides them, but is made pleasant and agreeable for them. The light of understanding lends them such support that very often without there being any resources and finding themselves far away from normal means, they lead such cheerful lives and pass their days in such

prosperity as if they possessed thousands of treasures. Their countenances display the freshness of wealth and the steadfastness of the rich. They have perfect trust in their Lord in times of hardship, with cheerful heart and complete certainty. They are given to sacrifice and the service of people is their habit. Even if the whole world were to become members of their family, they would feel no constraint. They are grateful to God Almighty, Who covers up their shortcomings on every occasion. They are taken into the protection of the Divine before an unbearable calamity descends upon them, for God is their Guardian in all circumstances, as He has said Himself:

وَهُوَ يَتَوَكَّلُ الصَّالِحِينَ²⁴⁵

Others are left to face the painful pursuit of worldly objects, and the extraordinary treatment that is accorded to these people is not accorded to anyone else. This characteristic of theirs can also be proved very soon by keeping company with them.

Another bounty is the personal love of God on which the perfect followers of the Holy Qur'ān are established. Love of God so saturates every particle of their existence that it becomes the essence of their being and the reality of their life. A wonderful love of the True Beloved surges up in their hearts and an extraordinary affection and eagerness take possession of their pure hearts, which cuts them off altogether from all others; and the fire of Divine love is so lit up in them that on special occasions it becomes palpably perceptible to those who keep company with them. It becomes impossible for them to adopt any design or strategy to keep it hidden, just as it is im-

²⁴⁵ 'He (Allāh) protects the righteous.' —Al-A'rāf, 7:197 [Publisher]

possible for worldly lovers to hide their love for their beloved from their companions and associates whom they yearn to see day and night. The love that penetrates their talk, and their looks, and their eyes, and their appearance, and their nature, and is manifested in every particle of their being, cannot be kept secret. Whatever they might do, some sign of it is betrayed.

The greatest sign of their sincerity is that they prefer their Beloved to everything else, and if they experience any hardships, they view them as bounties on account of their overpowering love, and torment becomes for them a sweet drink. No sharp sword can bring about separation between them and their Beloved and no great calamity can restrain them from His remembrance. They regard it as their very life, and find all their joy in it, and deem its existence as their own existence and consider it as the purpose of their lives. They are fond only of Him and find comfort only in Him. They have only Him in the world and become wholly His. They live for Him and die for Him. They are in the world but are outside the world; and possessing self, they are selfless. They have no concern with honour, name, life or comfort. They lose everything for the sake of the One and give up everything to find Him. They are consumed by an unperceived fire and cannot explain why they are consumed. They are deaf and dumb to every admonition, and are ready to endure every hardship and disgrace, and find their delight therein.

عشق است کہ بر خاک مذلت غلطانہ عشق است کہ بر آتش سوزاں بنشانہ
کس بہر کسے سر نہ بند جاں نہ فشانہ عشق است کہ ایں کار بصد صدق کنانہ²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Love is what makes one roll in the dust of disgrace,

Another bounty is high moral qualities like generosity, bravery, sacrifice, high resolve, compassion, forbearance, modesty and friendship. All these qualities are displayed by them in the best manner, and through the blessing of the following of the Holy Qur'ān they manifest them with fidelity till the end of their lives, and no constraint can restrain them from exhibiting these qualities. The truth is that every good quality, whether intellectual or relating to conduct or morals, which is manifested by man, is not manifested by human power. The true cause of its manifestation is the grace of God. As these people are the recipients of the grace of God more than anyone else, God Almighty bestows all good qualities upon them through His endless grace. In other words, no one is truly good except God Almighty and all high moral qualities and all virtues centre in Him. Then to the degree to which a person, discarding his self and his will, acquires nearness to the Being Who is All Good, to that degree Divine qualities are reflected in his soul. Thus, all the good qualities and true culture that a person acquires proceed from his nearness to God. That is as it should be, for creatures are nothing in themselves. Thus, the reflection of Divine moral qualities is manifested in the hearts of those who follow the Holy Qur'ān perfectly. Experience can show that the pure behaviour, and the spiritual eagerness, and the upsurge of love with which high moral qualities are manifested by them, are not equalled anywhere in the world. Everyone can make a claim and

Love is what makes one sit in the scorching fire.

No one offers his head, or sacrifices his life for someone else,

Love alone makes one perform this task with utmost sincerity.

[Publisher]

can boast of himself, but these are the only people who can pass safely through the narrow door of experience.

Such good qualities as are manifested by other people are shown artificially by hiding their deficiencies and their diseases. They display a false culture and their reality is exposed on the occasion of every little test. They import artificiality and make believe in the exercise of moral qualities in order to maintain good order in their way of life; if they were to follow on all occasions their inner deficiencies, their way of life would be upset. Though they carry a seed of good qualities according to their natural capacity, it is suppressed under the thorns of the desires of their ego. It is not manifested purely for the sake of God and is mixed up with selfish desires and cannot attain to perfection.

This seed develops into perfection purely for the sake of God only in those people who are devoted wholly to God and whose souls are filled by God with His own pure qualities, as they are empty of everything beside God. He makes those high qualities as dear to their hearts as they are dear to Him. Through their devotion, they acquire such a high rank of adorning themselves with Divine qualities that they become an instrument in the hands of God through which He manifests His own qualities. Finding them hungry and thirsty, He gives them to drink of pure water from His special spring in which no creature, in its own right, is His partner.

Another great bounty that is bestowed on the perfect followers of the Holy Qur'ān is the state of complete submission to God. Despite their own excellences, they keep an eye on their deficiencies and, in the presence of the greatness of God Almighty, pass all their time in hu-

mility, nothingness and meekness. They appreciate as their true reality humility and poverty and indigence, and being full of faults and mistakes. They deem the excellences that are bestowed on them like the temporary light which the sun casts upon a wall, and which has no real relationship with the wall, and is subject to decline like a borrowed garment. They confine all good and excellence in God, and deem His Perfect Being as the fountainhead of all good. By the observation of Divine qualities, their hearts are filled with the certainty that they themselves are nothing, so that they are wholly lost to their own existence, desires and designs. The surging ocean of the majesty of the Divine so envelops their hearts that they experience a thousand types of nothingness, and they are wholly cleansed and purified of the least suspicion of associating anything with God.

Another bounty is that their understanding and recognition of God are carried to completion and perfection through true visions, inner knowledge, clear revelation, converse with God and other supernatural experiences, so much so that between them and the second world is left only a thin and transparent veil across which they behold the facts of the other life in this very world. Other people cannot arrive at this perfect stage because their books are full of darkness and pile up hundreds of other veils on top of their own veils and cause their disease to grow till they arrive at death. Even the philosophers, who are in these days followed by the Brahmū Samājists and the whole of whose religion depends upon reason, are deficient in their way. Their deficiency is disclosed by the fact that their understanding, because of a hundred types of mistakes, does not travel beyond perceptible reason and conjectures.

It is obvious that a person whose understanding is confined to the visible and is subject to many mistakes, occupies a very low intellectual position in contrast with one whose understanding has arrived at the stage of the self-obvious. It is quite clear that beyond the stage of observation and reflection, there is the stage of self-evidence and certainty. Matters that are discovered through observation and reflection may become self-obvious and self-displaying through some other means. Thus, the stage of self-obviousness is possible according to reason, and though Brahmū Samājists deny its existence they admit that if it is found externally it would doubtless be higher and more perfect, and that the deficiencies that are left in observation and reflection would be filled only at that stage.

Everyone can understand that a matter being established as self-obvious is a higher and more perfect stage than the stage of reflection. For instance, though by observation of the creation a wise and good-natured person can think that all this should have a Creator, yet the obvious and bright way of Divine understanding, which is a strong argument in support of His existence, is that His creatures receive revelation, and before the end of the reality of things is disclosed they are made aware of it, and God responds to their supplications. God holds converse with them, the facts of the after-life are revealed to them in visions, they are informed of the true reality of reward and punishment, and many other types of mysteries relating to the life after death are disclosed to them. There is no doubt that all these matters carry certainty to a perfect and complete stage and carry one from the low-lying areas of reflection to the high minaret of obviousness. Converse with the Divine is the highest experience

of this type, for through it not only does a person discover hidden matters, but he is also informed of all the favours that God bestows upon that humble servant, and he is afforded such satisfaction through a delicious and blessed converse and is informed of the pleasure of God Almighty in consequence of which he is bestowed great strength for combating the evil attractions of the world. He is bestowed mountains of endurance and steadfastness. In the same manner, he is taught high degrees of knowledge and understanding and hidden mysteries, and deep fine points are communicated to him which cannot be discovered without special Divine teaching. If someone asks how can all these matters, concerning which it is said that they are acquired by perfect obedience to the Holy Qur'ān, be established as existing in effect in Islām; the answer is that such knowledge can be gained by keeping company with those who have this experience.

We have stated it several times, and repeat briefly in order to disclose it to every opponent, that this great wealth is found in Islām and is not found in any other religion. For a seeker after truth we make ourselves responsible for furnishing proof of it. If a person who is inspired by goodwill desires to carry out a research with patience and steadfastness, these matters can be disclosed to him according to his capacity and ability, if he will keep company with us.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 1, pp. 532-545, sub-footnote 3]

The Holy Qur'ān, on which depends obedience to the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him], is a Book by following which signs of salvation are manifested in this very world. That is the only Book which, through overt and covert means, perfects defec-

tive souls and delivers them from doubts and suspicions.

The overt way is that its statements are so comprehensive of verities and fine points that it refutes, through reasonable arguments, all the doubts which prevent people from reaching God, and being involved in which, hundreds of false sects are flourishing and hundreds of false doctrines are occupying the hearts of misguided people. All the light of the true and perfect teaching, which is needed for the darkness of the present age, shines forth in it like the sun, and the remedy for all the ills of the soul is set out in it and the exposition of all true insights is contained in it. There is no point of the knowledge of the Divine which might be disclosed at any time in the future, which has been left out of it.

The covert way is that following it truly, man, being purified wholly of inner vices, establishes a relationship with the Lord on High and the lights of his acceptance by God begin to descend upon him. He is so encircled by Divine favours that when he supplicates God in times of difficulty, God Almighty responds to him through His perfect mercy and compassion. Sometimes it happens that, when he is surrounded by his difficulties and sorrows, even if he supplicates a thousand times, he receives a loving response from his Gracious Lord every time in eloquent, delicious and blessed words. Divine revelation descends upon him like rain and he finds his heart so filled with the love of God as a transparent glass phial is filled with a delicate perfume. He is bestowed such pure delight of affection and eagerness which, breaking the strong chains of his ego, pulls him out of this smoky condition and bestows new life upon him every moment with the cool and comforting breezes of the True Be-

loved. Even before his death, he witnesses the Divine favours for witnessing which other people set their hopes on the life after death.

All these bounties do not depend upon any monastic exercises or discipline, but are bestowed in consequence of following the Holy Qur'ān and every true seeker can achieve them. For their achievement, however, perfect love of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] is a condition. In consequence of the love of Allāh's Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], a person partakes of these lights according to his capacity which have been bestowed in their perfection on the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Thus, there is no better way for a seeker after truth than to embrace this faith through someone possessing insight and understanding and, by following the Divine Word and developing love of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], to witness the truth of our statements with his own eyes. If he turns to us with a sincere heart for the achievement of this purpose, we would be ready, trusting in the grace and bounty of God, to point out the way to him, but both the grace of God and personal capacity would be needed.

It should be borne in mind that true salvation is like good health. As good health is a condition in which all the signs of health should be apparent and there should be no disorder affecting health, in the same way, true salvation is that which shows the signs of the attainment of salvation. That which is proved to exist should exhibit the effects and conditions of such existence, for without these effects and conditions its existence cannot be established. As we have pointed out several times, for the

establishment of salvation the conditions are that withdrawal towards God and the supremacy of the love of God should reach such a perfect stage that, through the company and attention and prayers of that person, these qualities should be produced in other persons also who possess the capacity. In his own personal condition, his insight should be so illumined that his blessings should be self-obvious in the sight of a seeker after truth; and he should possess all the specialities and be honoured with the converse of the Divine which are the signs of those who are close to God.

No one should be misled by the prophecies of astrologers and soothsayers, and it should be remembered that these people have no relationship with the lights and blessings of the men of God. We have written before that human instruments have no relationship with powerful prophecies and benevolent promises which are the very truth and which convey the good news of victory and help and majesty and honour. God Almighty has bestowed such natures upon men of God that their looks, company, attention and prayers possess the qualities of a sovereign remedy provided that the beneficiary should possess the requisite ability. Such people are not recognized only through their prophecies, but through their treasures of understanding, their extraordinary trust, their perfect sincerity, their steadfastness, their love of God, their eagerness, their extreme humility, the purity of their souls, their discarding the love of the world, the numberless blessings which descend upon them like rain, their having the support of God, their matchless steadfastness, their fidelity of a high degree, their peerless righteousness and purity, their grand resolve and the expansion of their minds.

Prophecies are not their true purpose. The purpose of their prophecies is that by mentioning in advance the blessings that are about to descend upon them, and upon those connected with them, they should assure people that they are the objects of special attention from God. The communications that they receive from God are intended as a conclusive and certain proof of their truth and their being from God. Those people on whom these holy blessings are bestowed in abundance are such concerning whom the law of Divine power of eternal wisdom has determined that their doctrines should be true and pure, and that they should be established in the true faith, and should have a strong relationship with God, and should be completely withdrawn from the world and all that it contains.

Their nature leans towards Divine lights and the true faith. It would be the height of stupidity to compare their highly qualified selves, which comprise all blessings, with unfortunate astrologers and soothsayers, for they have no relationship with contemptible worldly people. On the contrary, they are heavenly lights like the sun and the moon and the eternal light of Divine wisdom has created them so that by coming into the world they should illumine it. It should be borne in mind that as God has created certain remedies for physical illnesses and has brought into the world excellent things like antidotes, etc. for diverse types of pains and disorders and has invested these remedies from the beginning with the characteristic that when a diseased person, whose illness has not gone beyond remedy, uses these medicines with proper care, the Absolute Healer bestows to some degree health and strength upon the patient according to his capacity and ability, or restores him fully to health; in the same way,

God Almighty has, from eternity, invested the pure spirits of these accepted ones with the characteristic that their attention, prayers, companionship and high resolve are the remedy for spiritual ills. Their souls become the recipients of diverse types of grace through visions and converse with the Divine, and that grace manifests a grand effect for the guidance of mankind. In short, these men of God are a mercy for the creatures of God.

As it is the Divine law of nature in this world of causes and effects that a thirsty one slakes his thirst by drinking water, and a hungry one satisfies the pangs of hunger by eating food, in the same way, by Divine law Prophets and their perfect followers become the means of the healing of spiritual ills. Hearts obtain satisfaction in their company, defects of humanness are reduced, darknesses of the ego are dissipated, eagerness of love for the Divine surges up, and heavenly blessings are manifested. Without them, none of this can be achieved and these are their special signs by which they are recognized. *So ponder over this matter and be not heedless.*

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 345-356, sub-footnote 2]

Matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān Illustrated with *Sūrah Fātiḥah*

For the general benefit, we proceed to set out the quality by possessing which a writing or a speech qualifies for being held matchless and from God. Then we shall select a *Sūrah* of the Holy Qur'ān and shall prove that it possesses, in perfection and in completeness, all those qualities of matchlessness which have been set forth in the rule. Then if someone still refuses to accept those qualities of matchlessness the burden would lie upon him

to produce some other writing or speech which should possess all those qualities of matchlessness.

If a writing or speech fully resembles something which has proceeded from God and is His handiwork, that is to say, it is comprehensive of the external and internal wonders which exist in something that has been fashioned by God, it would be said that that writing or speech is of a rank which cannot be matched by human powers, for if a thing is admittedly matchless and has proceeded from God, then anything else sharing fully its qualities of matchlessness would itself be matchless. For instance, if something is in complete accord with that which is ten yards in length, then it would be established as a certainty that that thing also is ten yards in length.

Rose: a Wonder of Allāh's Creation

Now we shall select out of the creations of God a delicate creation, that is to say, a rose, and we shall set out the external and internal wonders by virtue of which it is admitted that it is beyond human power to create its match. We shall then prove that the wonders and excellences of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* not only match the wonders of the rose, but also exceed them. The reason why I select this illustration is that on one occasion I saw in a vision that I was holding in my hand the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* inscribed on a leaf and it was so beautiful and attractive that it appeared that the paper on which it was inscribed was loaded with soft red roses which were beyond count. When I recited any verse of the *Sūrah*, many of the roses flew upwards emitting an attractive sound. Those roses were very large, delicate, beautiful, fresh, and fragrant; and by their ascending upwards the heart and brain were perfumed, overpowered, and drawn away from the world

and its contents, on account of the matchless delights of the roses. From this vision, I gathered that the rose has a spiritual relationship with the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and that is why I have selected this illustration. I shall first set out as an illustration the wonders, external and internal, that are found in the rose and shall then describe as a contrast the external and internal wonders of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* so that a just reader should appreciate that the qualities, external and internal, that are found in the rose by virtue of which it is impossible to create its match, are found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* to a higher degree. Thus, I would also fulfil the indication that was conveyed to me in my vision.

It will be admitted without hesitation that a rose, like other creations of God, possesses such qualities that a man has not the power to create its match. These qualities are of two types. First, those that are manifested in its appearance. They are that its colour is most attractive, and its smell pleases the heart, and its body is soft, fresh, delicate and clean. Secondly, there are the inner qualities with which it is invested by God, that is to say, the qualities that are inherent in it. These are that it pleases and strengthens the heart, upholds all the faculties and spirits, operates as a laxative, and strengthens the stomach, liver, kidneys, arteries, the womb, and lungs. It is very helpful in a coma and in weakness of the heart, and is useful in many other physical ailments.

On account of these two types of qualities, it is believed that the rose is so perfect that it is not possible for any human being to make a flower which should be attractive in colour and in fragrance, and should be fresh and soft and delicate and clear like the rose and in addition should

possess all those qualities that are possessed by the rose. If it is asked why is it believed that human power is not able to create its match and why is it not possible that man should be able to produce in an artificial flower all the qualities, external and internal, that are found in the rose, the answer is that this has been proved in practice, and that no philosopher or physician has been able to compound any medicines, or to devise a recipe, that would produce a flower possessing the appearance and qualities of the rose.

Qualities of *Sūrah Fātiḥah* compared with the Rose

It should now be understood that these elements of matchlessness are to be found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, and indeed in the briefest portions of the Holy Qur'ān. First observe its external form and appreciate its colourful diction and beautiful exposition and sequence and other qualities which are essential for a good composition and which manifest themselves throughout the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, a manifestation that cannot be exceeded and which is free from every type of coarseness and wildness of idiom. Every phrase is most eloquent, every form of expression has its proper place, and every type of quality which enhances the beauty of its composition is found in it. The highest grade of eloquence that can be imagined is found in it in perfection and all that is needed to make its meaning clear is present. With all these good qualities, it is filled with the fragrance of truth and there is no exaggeration in it, which might have the slightest trace of falsehood. Its colourfulness is not like that of the poets which smacks of falsehood and is full of idle boasts. As the compositions of poets smell of falsehood and vain verbiage, this composition is full of the delicate fragrance

of truth. This fragrance is accompanied by a beauty of exposition, propriety of diction, colourfulness, smoothness and, as in the rose, its fragrance is accompanied by the beauty of its colour and clearness. These are its external qualities.

From the point of view of its internal qualities, the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* comprises remedies for great spiritual illnesses, and makes provision for the perfection of intellectual power and the power of action. It reforms great disorders and sets forth great insights and fine points which have been hidden from the eyes of thinkers and philosophers. The heart of a seeker is strengthened by its perusal and is healed of the ills of doubt and suspicion and error. Many high verities and fine realities which are needed for the perfection of the soul are furnished by its contents. Obviously, these excellences are such that they cannot be combined in the writing or speech of any human being. This impossibility is not mere inference, but is obvious. God Almighty has manifested the perfection of its external and internal qualities by setting out, in eloquent words, the fine points and high insights at the time of their need and in accordance with the requirements of truth. He has carried both sides, the external and the internal, to the highest grades of perfection. First, it sets out those necessary high insights the signs of which had disappeared from previous teachings, and no thinker or philosopher had set them forth. These have not been set out without need and in vain, but they have been set out at a time when they were absolutely necessary for the reform of the conditions of the age and without their being set out the age would have faced ruin and destruction. They have not been set out imperfectly or incompletely, and are perfect in themselves. The wisdom of a wise per-

son cannot cite a religious verity which has been left out of them. Nor is there any doubt which troubles the mind of a worshipper of falsehood that has not been set at rest. To express all these verities and fine points, of which there was great need, at the highest level of eloquence, is a great undertaking which is obviously above the capacity of human faculties.

Man is so bereft of merit that it is not possible for him to express truthfully average matters, which are not connected with high verities, in colourful and eloquent words, adhering all the time to truth and accuracy of statement. For instance, it is impossible for a shopkeeper, who is a high-grade poet and writer, to carry on his conversation with diverse types of customers eloquently and in colourful words, confining himself to whatever is appropriate on every occasion. Where economy of words is needed, he should speak less and where long speeches are appropriate, he should hold forth at length. When a discussion should ensue between him and his customer, he should adopt a method which should support his thesis. Or take the case of a magistrate whose duty it is to take down accurately the statements of parties and witnesses and to make appropriate comments on them and to put questions and to record answers which are appropriate for the investigation of the matter in dispute, and to set down legal arguments accurately according to the law, and to set forth the facts in their proper order and to record his opinion and the reasons in support thereof accurately. He would find it impossible to do all this at a level of eloquence which it would not be possible for another human being to exceed. The case of human compositions is such that without vain, unnecessary and irrelevant matters, their authors cannot take a step and

cannot set out anything without falsehood and idle statements. If they make an attempt it is defective like a picture which if it depicts a nose, it leaves out ears and if it depicts ears, it leaves out eyes. If truth is adhered to, eloquence has to be sacrificed, and if eloquence has to be pursued, falsehood and idle statements are piled up like an onion which is all leaves and has no substance.

Thus, sane reason determines that it is impossible to set out average matters in colourful and eloquent words while adhering to truth and the requirements of the occasion. Then it is easy to understand that to set out high insights according to the requirements of truth in colourful and eloquent language, better than which cannot be imagined, is a supernatural task which is beyond human power and is as impossible of achievement as it is impossible to create a flower which should completely resemble a rose in its external and internal qualities. Experience testifies and sane nature accepts that in ordinary matters it becomes impossible for a person to set forth something which is necessary and true, whether it relates to a matter of buying and selling or relates to judicial procedure, and it is desired to perform this task in the best manner, in the most appropriate and suitable language at the highest degree of eloquence. Then how is it possible for a human being to set forth in a writing truthfully and accurately insights and high verities according to need, comprising Divine truths, without omitting anything that is needed for the reform of the times and for conclusive argument and for repelling the objections of opponents while observing all the rules of debate and discussion, and comprising all necessary arguments, proofs of teachings, and the requisite questions and answers? The difficulties would be multiplied a hundred-

fold beyond those that we have set out in the first case, and yet it would be necessary that the beauty of the composition should be matchless and peerless, and that it should not be possible to express the subject matter in more eloquent language.

These are the qualities which are found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and in the Holy Qur'ān, which are in accord with the qualities of matchlessness of a rose. But another great quality is found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and the Holy Qur'ān, which is peculiar to them, and that is that to read them with attention and sincerity purifies the heart, and removes the veils of darkness, and expands the mind, and drawing the seeker after truth to God, manifests such lights and effects in him which are found only in those who are close to God and which cannot be acquired by any other means. We have given proof in this book of this spiritual effect, and if a seeker after truth should so desire we can satisfy him and furnish fresh proof.

Internal and External Qualities of *Sūrah Fātiḥah*

It should also be remembered that the matchlessness and peerlessness of the Holy Qur'ān has not only arguments of reason to establish it, but is confirmed by experience over a long period. For 1,300 years the Holy Qur'ān has been putting forward its qualities as a challenge to the whole world that in its external and internal qualities it is matchless and peerless and that no man can produce its equal, and yet no one has come forward to take up the challenge, not even with regard to one *Sūrah*, for instance the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. Now what could be a clearer miracle than that not only this Holy Word is beyond the reach of human faculties on the basis of reason, but experience over a long period also testifies to its miraculous nature.

If someone should be dissatisfied with both these types of testimony and should take pride in his knowledge and ability, or should believe that some other writer can compose something like the Holy Qur'ān, we shall proceed, as we have promised, to set forth a sample of the verities and fine points comprehended in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. Such a person should put forth some composition of his own as a rival to the external and internal qualities of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 394-403, footnote 11]

Like the Holy Qur'ān, the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* comprises two types of qualities which are matchless, one external and the other internal. As we have repeatedly set forth, its external quality is that its text is so colourful, bright, fine, delicate, eloquent, sweet and smooth, and its statements and sequence are so beautiful that it is not possible to set forth its meaning in an equal or more eloquent composition. If the writers and poets of the whole world should seek to expound its subject matter on their own in another text, which should be equal to or better than the text of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, they would find it impossible to do so, as the Holy Qur'ān has put forward its claim of matchlessness before the whole world over a period of 1,300 years without a response The silence of its opponents over the centuries has furnished the Holy Qur'ān with a degree of proof of matchlessness which is not possessed by the rose, for the thinkers and artisans of the world have never been invited to match anything else in this manner, nor have they been warned that in the case of their inability to do so they would be subjected to diverse types of ruin and destruction

Now we repeat the inner qualities of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* so

that they are duly appreciated by those who reflect. Be it known, therefore, that as the All-Wise has placed diverse types of benefits for the human body in the rose, such as that it strengthens the heart and faculties and souls, and is helpful in the case of several diseases, in the same way, God Almighty has placed in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, and indeed in the whole of the Holy Qur'ān, healing for spiritual ills and a cure for inner diseases, which is not to be found anywhere else, inasmuch as it is filled with those verities which had disappeared from the world without leaving any trace

It was in truth a rain of mercy which descended from heaven to save the lives of the extremely thirsty. The spiritual life of the world depends upon the descent from heaven of that life-giving water and not a drop of it is such that it is not a remedy for some ill. The condition of the world through centuries had proved that it could not remedy these diseases on its own, without the descent of this light, and could remove its darkness without a heavenly light which should illumine the world with its rays of truth, and should cause those to see who had never seen, and should cause those to understand who had never understood. This heavenly light not only presented such true insights as had disappeared from the world, but filled many minds with these jewels of truth and wisdom, and drew many hearts to its beauteous countenance, and carried many to high stages of knowledge and action through its powerful effect. Both these types of qualities which are found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and in the Holy Qur'ān are such bright arguments for proving the matchlessness of the Word of God, as the qualities of the rose are admitted by everybody to be beyond human power. Indeed the truth is that as these qualities of the Holy

Qur'ān are obviously extraordinary and beyond the reach of human power, such qualities are not to be found in the rose.

The greatness and glory and matchlessness of these qualities is fully appreciated when they are considered together collectively. First, it should be considered that the text should be so eloquent, sweet, pure, attractive and colourful that if any human being should desire to compose such a text, which should be comprehensive of all the meanings which are to be found in this eloquent text, he would find it impossible to do so. Secondly, it should be considered that the subject matter of this text should be comprehensive of such verities and fine points which should be of a very high order and no phrase or word or letter should lack wisdom. Thirdly, it should be considered that those verities should be such as are sorely needed by this age. Fourthly, it should be considered that those verities should be so matchless that no thinker or philosopher should have discovered them by his own observation or reflection. Fifthly, it should be considered that those verities should have appeared as a fresh bounty and that before their appearance the people of that age should have been wholly unaware of them. Sixthly it should be considered that the text should possess a heavenly blessing in that, by following it, a seeker after truth should be able to establish a true relationship with God Almighty, and a true affection for Him; and that such lights should begin to shine in him as ought to shine in men of God.

When they are considered collectively, sane reason unhesitatingly confirms that it is impossible and beyond the power of a human being to produce a text which should

comprise all these perfect qualities. One is filled with awe by the contemplation at one time of all these overt and covert excellences, and a wise person is assured that it is beyond human reason and imagination to produce such a combination. A rose does not inspire such awe. The Holy Qur'ān possesses this speciality that its qualities that have been mentioned as proof of its matchlessness are self-obvious. When an opponent finds that not one letter of it is out of place and not in accord with wisdom and appropriateness, and that not a single phrase of it is such as is not sorely needed for the reform of the age together with such perfection of eloquence that it is not possible to replace one line of its text with another, his heart is overcome by a great awe.

An ignorant person who has never considered these matters might perhaps ask what is the proof that all these qualities are to be found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, and indeed in the whole of the Holy Qur'ān. The proof is that those who considered the matchless excellences of the Holy Qur'ān and found its text possessing such eloquence that they failed utterly to produce its like, and found its verities and fine points of such high degree that they did not find their match in the whole world, and observed such wonderful effects in it as are not to be found in human words, and observed this holy quality in it that it was not revealed without purpose, but descended at a time of true need, they at once admitted its matchless greatness. Those who on account of their eternal misfortune were deprived of the bounty of faith were yet so overawed by this matchless composition that in their confusion they announced that it was plain magic. A just person finds it a strong argument in support of the matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān and a bright proof, that despite the fact that

for 1,300 years the Holy Qur'ān has incited its opponents to produce its match and called those who failed to do so, and yet continued in their opposition, wicked, contaminated, cursed and condemned to hell; yet the opponents chose all the humiliation and dishonour and disgrace for themselves and submitted to being called false, contemptible, shameless, wicked, mischievous, faithless and condemned to hell, but could not produce even a short *Sūrah* for comparison with the Holy Qur'ān. Nor were they able to find fault with the merits, qualities, greatnesses and verities which the Word of God presents. They were under challenge, and still are, that if they do not wish to give up their disbelief and lack of faith, they should produce the like of one *Sūrah* of the Holy Qur'ān and should confront us with a text which comprises all those external and internal qualities which are to be found in the briefest *Sūrah* of the Holy Qur'ān.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 pp. 403-410, footnote 11]

To bring our argument to its completion, we will set forth some fine points and verities of *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah*. First we will write *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* and then write about its profound verities. The *Sūrah Fātiḥah* runs as follows:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ○ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ ○
 مَلِكُ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ○ إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ○ اهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ○
 صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ○²⁴⁷

²⁴⁷ 'In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful. All praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds, the Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement. Thee alone do we worship and Thee alone do we implore for help. Guide us in the straight path—The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings, those who have not incurred Thy displeasure, and those who have not gone

Given below are a few points of wisdom and verities in the commentary of this *Sūrah* by way of illustration.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ²⁴⁸

is the first verse of this *Sūrah* and of all other *Sūrahs* of the Holy Qur'ān and also occurs in the Holy Qur'ān at another place. It is repeated in the Holy Qur'ān more often than any other verse. It has become a practice among the Muslims that at the beginning of every action in which good and blessing is sought, this verse is recited as a sign of blessing and as a supplication for help. Thus it has become well known among enemies and friends and among old and young, so much so that even if a person is entirely unaware of all other verses of the Qur'ān, there is a strong hope that he would not be unaware of this verse.

Of the perfect verities that this verse comprises, one is that the purpose of this verse is to teach the humble and unaware servants of God that there are many attributes of the Great name of God which is Allāh, and which in the Divine idiom of the Qur'ān is comprehensive of all perfect qualities, and is free from all defects, and is used for the True God, One without associate, and is the fountain-head of all grace, and that two of those attributes which are set out in the verse *Bismillāh*, namely *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Raḥīmiyyat*, demand the revelation of the Word of God and the spread of its lights and blessings.

The descent of the Holy Word of God into the world and its being made known to God's creatures is the demand

astray.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:1-7 [Publisher]

²⁴⁸ 'In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:1 [Publisher]

of the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*. The attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat* is manifested without being preceded by the action of any person and merely by the beneficence and bounty of God. God has created the sun and the moon and water and air, etc. for the welfare of His creatures and all this beneficence and bounty is by virtue of the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*. No one can claim that these things have been created as a reward of any action of his. In the same way, the word of God which has descended for the reform and guidance of mankind, has descended by virtue of this attribute. There is no animate who can claim that the Holy Word of God which comprehends His law has been revealed in consequence of any action or effort of his or as the reward of his virtue. This is the reason why despite the fact that there have been thousands who claim to be pure and virtuous and who have spent their lives in piety and worship, yet the Holy and Perfect Word of God which brought into the world His commandments and informed men of His designs, was revealed only at such time when it was needed.

It is, however, necessary that the Holy Word of God should be revealed only to those who occupy a high place in holiness and purity of soul, inasmuch as holiness has no relationship with impurity. But it is not necessary that in every case of holiness and virtue there should be a revelation of the Word of God. The revelation of the true law and teaching of God Almighty depends upon true need. Whenever the need arose and it appeared that the Divine Word should be revealed for the reform of the age in that time, God Almighty, Who is All-Wise, revealed the word. At no other time is the perfect Word of God, which comprises Divine law, revealed, though there might be present millions of people who are righteous

and pure and possess a high degree of holiness and virtue. It is true that God holds converse with some pure people but that also happens when according to Divine Wisdom true need arises for such converse. The difference between the two needs is that Divine law is revealed at the time of such need when the people of the world, through misguidance and error, have turned away from the right path and a new law is needed to bring them back to it, which should remove their afflictions and lift their darkness totally by the light of its perfect and healing statements, and should provide with its forceful pronouncements the remedy which is needed by the corrupt condition of the world.

But the converse that is held with the *Auliya'* is not preceded by this great need. Very often, the purpose of such converse is to invest the soul of a saint with steadfastness at a time of distress, or to convey some piece of good news to him at a time when he is overcome by sorrow and grief. But the perfect and Holy Word of God Almighty that descends upon Prophets and Messengers is revealed, as we have just stated, when a true need for it arises and when mankind is in dire need of its revelation. Thus the true cause of the descent of the Word of God is its proper need. When the whole night becomes dark and no light is left you realize that the appearance of the new moon is near. In the same way, when the darkness of misguidance overcomes the world, sane reason appreciates that the appearance of the spiritual moon is near. In the same way, when people are afflicted with a drought, the wise among them consider the descent of the rain of mercy very near.

In His physical law also God has appointed some seasons

for rain during which God's creatures are truly in need of rain. From the rain that descends during those seasons, it cannot be concluded that at that time people do more good and at other times they are involved in vice. Those are seasons when cultivators are in need of rain and the descent of rain at that time becomes the cause of the growth of vegetation throughout the year. In the same way, the descent of the Word of God is not on account of the piety and righteousness of a particular person, that is to say, the cause of the descent of such word is not that a particular person was very holy and virtuous, or was hungry and thirsty for the truth. As we have written so often, the true cause of the revelation of heavenly Books is their need, that is to say, that gloom and darkness which spread over the world and demand a heavenly light which should dispel the darkness. This is indicated in the Divine Word in the verse:

إِنَّمَا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ²⁴⁹

This Night, according to its common interpretation, is a Blessed Night, but some of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān indicate that the condition of the darkness of the world is also a Night of Decree on account of its hidden qualities. In that condition of darkness, sincerity and steadfastness, and piety and worship, have great value in the estimation of God. It was because of that condition of darkness which at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] had arrived at its climax and demanded the descent of a Grand Light, that observing this dark condition and having mercy on the creatures afflicted with darkness, there was an up-

²⁴⁹ 'We sent it down on the Night of Destiny.'—Al-Qadr, 97:2
[Publisher]

surge in the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat* and heavenly blessings addressed themselves to the earth. That dark condition became blessed for the world and the world thereby received a grand mercy so that the Perfect Man and the Chief of the Prophets, like whom there had been no one, nor ever will be, came for the guidance of the world and brought that bright Book for the world whose match no eye has beheld. It was a great manifestation of spiritual perfection of God that, at a time of gloom and darkness, He sent down a Grand Light which is named the *Furqān* and which distinguishes between truth and falsehood and which demonstrated the coming of truth and the disappearance of falsehood. It descended upon the earth when the earth had become spiritually dead and land and sea had been greatly corrupted. By its descent it accomplished that to which God Almighty has pointed in the verse:

إِعْلَمُوا أَنَّ اللَّهَ يَحْيِي الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا²⁵⁰

That is to say: The earth had died and God revived it afresh.

It should be remembered that the descent of the Holy Qur'ān which took place for the purpose of reviving the earth came about through the upsurge of the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*. This is the attribute which sometimes manifests itself in a material way and causes the rain of mercy to descend upon dry land and thus makes provision for those who are afflicted with famine. The same attribute sometimes surges up spiritually and has mercy on the condition of those who are hungry and thirsty and near unto death on account of misguidance and error, and

²⁵⁰ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:18 [Publisher]

lack the nourishment of truth and righteousness which is the source of spiritual life. Thus the Gracious One, as He bestows nourishment upon the body at the time of need, so of His Perfect Mercy He provides spiritual nourishment also at the time of need.

It is true, however, that the Word of God descends only upon those of the elect with whom God is pleased, but it is not true that without any true need a heavenly Book is revealed to anyone with whom God is pleased, or that without any such need He necessarily and continuously holds converse with such a one. The Book of God is revealed only when its need arises. The true cause of Divine revelation is the *Rahmāniyyat* of God Almighty and not anyone's action. This is a great verity of which our opponents the Brahmū Samājists and others are unaware.

Then it should be understood that for anyone to become the recipient of the Grace of Divine revelation, and to arrive at his goal through its blessings and lights and to obtain the fruits of his effort, comes about by the support of the attribute of *Rahīmiyyat*. This is why, after the attribute of *Rahmāniyyat*, Allāh the Exalted cites the attribute of *Rahīmiyyat*, so that it should become known that the effects of Divine revelation which manifest themselves in the souls of people derive from the attribute of *Rahīmiyyat*. To the degree to which a person turns to God, and sincerity and faith take possession of his heart, and he adopts obedience by putting forth appropriate effort, to that degree his heart is affected by Divine revelation and he derives benefit from its lights and the signs of those who are accepted by God are manifested in him.

The second verity which is contained in:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ²⁵¹

is that this verse has been revealed for the commencement of the Holy Qur'ān and the purpose of its recitation is to seek help from the Being Who comprehends in Himself all perfect attributes, one of which is that He is *Raḥmān* and out of His pure Benevolence He provides the means of cultivating good and blessing and guidance for a seeker after truth; and another of Whose attributes is that He is *Raḥīm*, Who does not let go waste anyone's effort and blesses it with good results and bestows the fruit of his diligence upon him. These two attributes are such that without their help no design, whether secular or religious, can be carried to its goal.

Reflection would show that these two attributes are in operation all the time to bring about the fulfilment of all designs. The *Raḥmāniyyat* of God began to manifest itself before man came into being, and it provides such resources for man as are beyond his power and which he cannot acquire through any design or planning. These resources are not bestowed as a consequence of any action but only out of Grace and Benevolence, as, for instance, the advent of Prophets, the revelation of Books, the provision of rain, the performance of their functions by the sun and the moon and air and clouds, and the appearance in the world of man himself equipped with diverse types of faculties and capacities and his being granted a term of life in health, peace and leisure. All these are matters that manifest themselves in conse-

²⁵¹ 'In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful.'—*Al-Fātiḥah*, 1:1 [**Publisher**]

quence of the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*. In the same way, the *Raḥīmiyyat* of God is manifested when, possessing all faculties, man employs those God-given faculties to accomplish something and puts forth his strength and effort, then it is the way of the Divine that He does not let his effort go waste and blesses it with good results. It is His *Raḥīmiyyat* which quickens his dead effort.

The purpose of the verse is that when beginning the study of the Holy Qur'ān, help and blessing should be sought from the *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Raḥīmiyyat* of God Almighty Who comprehends all perfect attributes. The object of seeking blessings from *Raḥmāniyyat* is that God, of His Bounty and Beneficence, might provide all those means which are needed before an effort is put forth in following Divine revelation. For instance, the grant of life and leisure and appropriate opportunity, and the possession of faculties and strength, and the prevention of anything that might disturb comfort and peace or might prevent the heart from paying full attention, and to be bestowed the needed capacity; all these are achieved through the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat*. The purpose of seeking blessings through *Raḥīmiyyat* is that the Perfect Being should bless one's efforts with good results, and should safeguard one's hard work against being wasted and should bless it in consequence of the struggle and effort put forth. Thus when beginning the study of the Divine Word, and indeed at the beginning of every great effort, it is a high verity to seek blessings and help from the *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Raḥīmiyyat* of God Almighty. In this way, man learns the reality of the Unity of God, and becoming certain of his own ignorance and unawareness, stupidity and error, and helplessness and contemptibility, his mind is fixed upon the Greatness and Glory of the

Source of all grace. Considering himself wholly poor and indigent and as nothing, man seeks the blessings of *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Raḥīmiyyat* from the All-Powerful. These Divine attributes are in operation of themselves but the All-Wise has made it a law of nature from the beginning that man's prayer and seeking help have a great share in success. Divine grace addresses itself to resolving the difficulties of those who supplicate earnestly for success in their undertakings and whose supplications arrive at the full degree of sincerity. A person who considers his own weaknesses and observes his own defaults does not commence any enterprise freely and optimistically because his condition of servitude instructs him that he should seek the help of God Almighty Who is the Absolute Controller. This eagerness of true servitude is found in every heart which retains its natural simplicity and is aware of its weakness. A sincere person whose soul is not afflicted with any pride or arrogance and who is well aware of his weakness and nothingness, and does not find himself competent to perform anything successfully, and finds no power or strength in himself when he begins an enterprise, naturally supplicates for heavenly strength. He beholds the Powerful Being of God in His Perfection and Glory all the time and he perceives that success in any endeavour depends upon *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Raḥīmiyyat*. Then forthwith before putting forth his defective and worthless effort, he seeks Divine help through the supplication:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ²⁵²

Through such humility he becomes worthy to be be-

²⁵² 'In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful.'—
Al-Fātiḥah, 1:1 [Publisher]

stowed power out of God's power, and strength out of His strength, and knowledge out of His knowledge, and to be successful in his designs. For proof of this no arguments of logic or philosophy are needed, for the soul of every person possesses the capacity to realize this and the personal experiences of a true man of understanding constantly bear witness to its truth. There is nothing artificial about a creature seeking help from God, nor is it the result of idle thinking, nor is it without substantial result. This verity has been established by the eternal way of God Almighty, Who is truly the support of the world and with Whose support the ark of this universe constantly moves, that He lends His support to those who, deeming themselves low and contemptible, seek His support and begin their enterprise with His name. When they turn to God truly out of their humility and servitude, they are helped by His support. To seek the help of the name of that Fountainhead of Grace, Who is *Raḥmān* and *Raḥīm*, before commencing any substantial enterprise, is a way of respect and servitude and nothingness and indigence. This is the way which is the first step towards the acknowledgement of the Unity of God in one's actions. By adopting it, a person takes on the humility of children and is purified of the arrogance which fills the hearts of the proud people of the world. By being convinced of his own weakness and the effectiveness of Divine help, he partakes of that understanding which is bestowed on the special men of God.

Without doubt, to the degree to which a person adopts this way, and makes it his duty to act upon it, and perceives his ruin in leaving it out, to that degree his faith in the Unity of God is established, and to that degree he is cleansed of arrogance and self-importance, and to that

degree the darkness of artificiality is removed from his countenance, and the light of sincerity begins to shine on his face. This is the verity which gradually leads a person to the stage of his losing himself in God, till he realizes that he receives everything from God and nothing is his own. Whenever anyone adopts this way, the fragrance of the Unity of God begins to reach him at once, and his heart and brain are perfumed thereby, provided his sense of smell is not corrupted. In adopting this verity a seeker after truth has to confess his own nothingness, and has to testify to God the Glorious being the Absolute Controller and the Fountainhead of grace. These two are the goal of the seekers after truth and are a necessary condition for the acquisition of the stage of being lost in God. To understand this necessary condition it is enough to know that even when there is widespread rain it falls only on the one who takes his stand at the place where rain is falling. Only those find who seek, and those are bestowed who ask.

Those, who at the beginning of an enterprise, rely upon their skill, intelligence or strength, and do not put their trust in God Almighty, do not value properly the All-Powerful Who comprehends the whole world in His support. Their faith is like the dry branch which has no longer any relationship with its flourishing and green parent tree, and which has no part in its freshness and its flowers and its fruits. It has only an apparent connection with the tree which can be disrupted by the slightest stir of the wind, or by being shaken by someone. Such is the faith of the dry philosophers who do not rely on the Supporter of the universe and do not realize their dependence during every moment upon Allāh Who is the Fountainhead of all grace. These people are as far from the Unity

of God as darkness is from light. They do not understand that to submit oneself to the great power of the All-Powerful, realizing one's own nothingness, is the last stage of servitude and is the extreme point of the Unity of God, which makes the spring of total annihilation gush forth, and in which one is lost altogether to one's ego and its designs, and believes truly in the complete control of God. One should disregard the argument of the philosophers that there is no need to seek Divine help in beginning an enterprise, inasmuch as God has already invested our nature with appropriate powers and it would be an act of supererogation to supplicate Him again for those powers. It is true that God Almighty has invested us with some powers for the doing of certain acts, but this does not mean that we are thereby freed from the governance of the Supporter of the universe and that He has separated Himself from us and has drawn away His support and has deprived us of His limitless grace. Whatever He has bestowed on us is limited, and what we demand from Him is without limit. Besides, we have not been given any power to accomplish that which is beyond our strength. Indeed reflection would show that we have not been given any power in its perfection. For instance, our physical powers depend upon our health, and our health depends on causes, some of which are heavenly and some are earthly, and all of which are beyond our power. In truth, the Supporter of the universe, by virtue of His being the Cause of causes, so comprehends our external conditions and our internal conditions and our first and our last, and our above and our below, and our right and our left, and our hearts and our souls, and all the faculties of our souls, that it is a very fine problem, which is beyond the reach of human reason. It is not

necessary to go further into the matter, for what we have said so far is enough to refute the objection of our opponents.

The only way of obtaining the grace of the Supporter of the universe is to supplicate with all one's faculties and force and strength. This is not a new way but has been inherent from the beginning in man's nature. A person who desires to tread along the path of servitude adopts this way, and the person who seeks the grace of God follows this path, and the person who seeks Divine mercy obeys these eternal laws. These laws are not new like the god of the Christians, but are firm laws which are eternal and are the practice of Allāh which has been in operation all the time, the truth of which is apparent to every sincere seeker on account of the multiplicity of his experience Every blessing proceeds in this way that the Being Who is the Absolute Controller and the Cause of causes and is the Fountainhead of all grace, whose name in the idiom of the Qur'ān is Allāh, first displays His attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat* and brings into existence whatever is needed, before one's own effort, out of His pure grace and beneficence without the intervention of any action on our part. When the attribute of *Raḥmāniyyat* has done this work to perfection, and man having been bestowed the power exerts himself to the limit, then it is for God Almighty to display His attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat*, and to bring about a good result from the effort and diligence of His servant and safeguarding his industry from going waste, to bestow his object upon him. It is on account of this second attribute that it is said that he who seeks finds and he who asks is given, and he who knocks it is opened for him

It is a misunderstanding of a verity to think that sometimes this seeking of help proves of no avail and the *Rahmāniyyat* and *Rahīmiyyat* of God do not make themselves manifest on all occasions. Indeed God Almighty hears the supplications which are made in sincerity, and helps in an appropriate manner those who seek His help. Sometimes it happens that a person's prayer seeking help is not inspired by sincerity and humility, nor is his spiritual condition in order so that while his lips utter the prayer, his heart is heedless, or only makes a show. Sometimes it happens that God hears the prayer and bestows whatever He considers appropriate and best in His Perfect Wisdom, but an ignorant person does not recognize the hidden beneficence of God and on account of his ignorance and unawareness begins to complain, ignoring the subject matter of the verse:

عَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ²⁵³

It may be that you dislike a thing and it is in reality better for you, and it may be that you like a thing and it is in fact harmful for you. Allāh knows the true reality of things and you know it not.

So far it is clear that the verse:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ²⁵⁴

comprehends the grand verity which comprises the excellent means of making progress in faith in the Unity of God and in servitude and sincerity, which is not matched in any other book. If anyone claims that it is so matched

²⁵³ Al-Baqarah, 2:217 [Publisher]

²⁵⁴ 'In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful'—
Al-Fātiḥah, 1:1 [Publisher]

elsewhere, let him set forth this verity along with the other verities which we shall expound below.

Some short-sighted and ignorant opponents of Islām have raised an objection to the proper composition of **Bismil-lāh**. One of them is the Rev. Mr. 'Imād-ud-Dīn, who has set forth the objection in his book *Hidāyat-ul-Muslimīn*. Another one is Bāwā Narāyan Singh, a lawyer of Amritsar, who deeming the objection of the reverend gentleman as having substance, has, out of the rancour of his heart, repeated it in his journal *Vidya Parkāshak*. We now proceed to set forth the objection together with its answer so that every just person should realize to what degree of inner blindness bigotry has driven our opponents so that bright light appears darkness to them and excellent perfume smells vile in their nostrils. The objection by these critics raised against the profound and deeper meaning of the verse:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ²⁵⁵

is that the sequence of *Raḥmān* and *Raḥīm* in this verse is not proper and that the proper sequence should have been *Raḥīm* and *Raḥmān*, inasmuch as *Raḥmān* signifies that mercy of the Divine which is general and comprehensive and *Raḥīm* signifies the mercy of the Divine which is limited and special, and the rules of composition require that that which is limited should precede that which is general and unlimited and not vice versa.

This is the objection which these two gentlemen have raised with their eyes shut against a text the excellence of which has been admitted by all the learned of Arabia

²⁵⁵ 'In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful'—*Al-Fātiḥah*, 1:1 [Publisher]

despite their opposition to Islām, among whom were included great poets. Great enemies of Islām were wonder-struck by the high grade of this text and many of them who were well-versed in judging the merits of a composition and were men of justice, finding the Qur'ānic composition beyond the reach of human power and esteeming it a great miracle, believed in it. Their testimonies are referred to at various places in the Holy Qur'ān This ignorant Christian does not appear to be aware that true eloquence does not demand that the small should always precede the large, and that the true rule is that a text should be the mirror of reality. Here also by making *Raḥmān* take precedence over *Raḥīm*, the verse has become a mirror of reality. A detailed account of this natural sequence will be set forth in the course of the discussion of the other verses of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 414-435, footnote 11]

Spiritual Characteristics of *Sūrah Fātiḥah*

A spiritual characteristic of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* is that to recite it in one's prayers with full attention and to establish its teaching in one's heart, believing it to be true, brings about the illumination of one's soul. One's mind is expanded thereby and the darkness of humanness is dispelled and the worshipper begins to experience the grace of the Fountainhead of grace. He is encircled by the lights of being accepted by the Divine and progresses towards being honoured by the converse of God and derives benefit from true visions and express revelations. He is counted among those who are close to the Divine and such wonders of inspiration and acceptance of prayers and the disclosure of hidden matters and Divine support proceed from him the like of which is not found

among others. For such of our opponents who deny this, the proof has been set out in this book.

Invitation to All Seekers after Truth

This humble one is ready to satisfy every seeker after truth not only from among our opponents but even to those who agree with us nominally and who are Muslims on the outside, whose faith is veiled and whose bodies are without life. In this dark age they do not believe in heavenly signs and consider revelation impossible and describe it as illusion and imagination. They have a very narrow concept of human progress which is confined to intellectual problems and conjectures. Their concept of God Almighty is that of someone extremely weak and lacking strength. This humble one submits respectfully to all these people that if they deny the effectiveness of the Holy Qur'ān and adhere to their old ignorance, they should take advantage of the opportunity that this humble servant is prepared to satisfy everyone from his own experiences. It is proper, therefore, that as seekers after truth they should turn to me and should observe for themselves the characteristics of the Divine Word which have been mentioned above, and emerging out of gloom and darkness should enter true light.

So far this humble one is alive, but life is uncertain. It is proper, therefore, that on hearing this announcement attention should be paid to the establishment of truth and the removal of falsehood so that if my claim should not be established a reason may become available for denial; but if my claim is established then the opponents should give up their false notions and should embrace Islām so as to escape humiliation and disgrace in this life and chastisement and torment in the next. Observe, therefore,

brethren and dear ones and philosophers and pundits and Christian ministers and Āryās and followers of nature and Brahmū Samājists, that I proclaim openly that if anyone doubts the characteristics of the Holy Qur'ān that I have mentioned and has any hesitation in accepting them, he should turn to me without delay and by keeping company with me for some time steadfastly and sincerely, should witness the accuracy of the above statements with his own eyes, lest after my passing away someone might assert unjustly that he was not invited openly and had not become aware of my claim so that he could have followed it up and asked me for its proof. So, brethren and seekers after truth, please observe that I say it openly and, trusting in God, Whose lights I see day and night, I assume the responsibility that if you will seek the truth with sincerity of heart and will keep company with me for some time steadfastly and in good faith, it will become obvious to you that the spiritual qualities that have been mentioned are truly to be found in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* and the Holy Qur'ān. How blessed then is the person who, emptying his heart of bigotry and rancour and being eager to embrace Islām, should pay attention to my invitation in sincerity and good faith for achieving the purpose in view, and how unfortunate is the man who should pay no attention to this open invitation and should become deliberately an object of the curse and wrath of God Almighty. Death is near and the termination of life is at the door.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 626-635, footnote 11]

***Sūrah Fātiḥah* Comprehends the Purposes of the Holy Qur'ān**

The *Sūrah Fātiḥah* briefly comprehends all the pur-

poses of the Holy Qur'ān. This is referred to in the verse:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِي وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيمَ ²⁵⁶

This means that: O Prophet! We have bestowed upon thee the seven verses of the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* which briefly comprehend all the purposes of the Holy Qur'ān and, in contrast with them, there is the Great Qur'ān which sets out religious purposes in detail.

For this reason, this *Sūrah* is known as the Mother of the Book and the Comprehensive *Sūrah*. It is the Mother of the Book because all purposes of the Holy Qur'ān can be derived from it, and it is called the Comprehensive *Sūrah* as it briefly comprehends all types of learning contained in the Qur'ān. It is for this reason that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has said that reciting *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, is like reciting the whole Qur'ān. The Holy Qur'ān and the *Aḥādīth* show that the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* is a mirror that displays the Qur'ān. For instance, it is one of the purposes of the Holy Qur'ān that it sets out all the perfect praise of God Almighty and states clearly the complete perfection that He possesses. This is briefly set forth in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* in the verse:

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ ²⁵⁷

which means that all types of perfect praise are established for Allāh Who is comprehensive of all excellences and is worthy of every type of worship.

The second purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is that it manifests God's being the Perfect Fashioner and the Creator of the universe, and sets forth the beginning of the universe,

²⁵⁶ Al-Ḥijr, 15:88 [Publisher]

²⁵⁷ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2 [Publisher]

and describes as a creation of God all that is part of the universe and proves the falsehood of those who are opposed to this. This purpose is set forth briefly in the phrase:

رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ²⁵⁸

The third purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to establish the unearned grace of God and to set forth His general Mercy. This purpose is conveyed briefly in:

الرَّحْمَنِ²⁵⁹

The fourth purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to establish that grace of God which follows upon effort and diligence. This is set forth in:

الرَّحِيمِ²⁶⁰

The fifth purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to set forth the true condition of the hereafter. This is comprehended in the phrase:

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ²⁶¹

The sixth purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to set forth the sincerity and servitude and purification of the soul from that which is beside Allāh, and the remedy of spiritual ills and the reform of moral qualities and the upholding of the Unity of God in worship. This is included briefly in the affirmation:

إِلَٰهًا تَعْبُدُ²⁶²

The seventh purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to establish God as the true source of all action, and of all strength

²⁵⁸ 'Lord of all the worlds'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2 [Publisher]

²⁵⁹ 'The Gracious'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:3 [Publisher]

²⁶⁰ 'The Merciful'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:3 [Publisher].

²⁶¹ 'Master of the Day of Judgement'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:4 [Publisher]

²⁶² 'Thee alone do we worship.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:5 [Publisher]

and benevolence, and help and steadfastness, and obedience and freedom from sin, and the acquisition of all the means of doing good, and the reform of the here and the hereafter, and to emphasise the need of seeking His help in all matters. This purpose is set forth briefly in the affirmation:

إِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ²⁶³

The eighth purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to set forth the fine points of the straight path and to emphasise the need of seeking it through prayer and supplication. This is briefly included in supplication:

لَاهِدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ²⁶⁴

The ninth purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to set forth the way and manner of those who become the recipients of God's bounty and grace so that the hearts of the seeker after truth might be comforted. This purpose is included in:

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ²⁶⁵

The tenth purpose of the Holy Qur'ān is to set forth the qualities and way of those with whom God was displeased and of those who lost the way and fell into all sorts of innovations so that the seekers after truth should be warned of their ways. This purpose is included in:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ²⁶⁶

²⁶³ 'Thee alone do we implore for help.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:5 [Publisher]

²⁶⁴ 'Guide us in the right path.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6 [Publisher]

²⁶⁵ '...the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

²⁶⁶ '...those who have not incurred displeasure, and those who have not gone astray.' Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

These are the ten purposes that are set out in the Holy Qur'ān and that are the roots of all verities. So they are all briefly mentioned in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 580-585, footnote 11]

Perfection in Conduct by Following the Holy Qur'ān

Those who put their trust in reason alone are as defective and deficient in action, faithfulness and sincerity of conduct, as they are deficient in knowledge, understanding and certainty. Their group has not set up an example which should prove that they are included among millions of holy people who are the faithful servants of God and are acceptable to Him. The blessings of these were so manifested that through their preaching and admonition with prayer and attention, and the influence of their company, hundreds of people began to tread the straight path and, becoming the men of God, turned wholly to their Lord. They paid no attention to the world and its contents, and cut off altogether from the delights, comforts, joys, renowns, prides, properties, and kingdoms of this world. They followed the path of righteousness whereby hundreds of them lost their lives, and thousands of heads were cut off, and the earth became wet with the blood of hundreds of thousands of holy ones. Despite all these calamities, they exhibited such fidelity that like devoted lovers they laughed while their feet were shackled, were joyful while suffering pain, and were grateful in the midst of misfortunes. For the sake of the love of the One they abandoned their homes, chose disgrace in place of honour, distress in place of comfort, poverty in place of wealth, and were content with indigence, solitude and helplessness in place of every kind of

relationship, association and joy. By shedding their blood and having their heads cut off and laying down their lives, they set a seal upon the existence of God. By the blessing of following the Word of God they acquired such special lights as have never been found in others. Such people were not only to be found in ages past, but this group of the elect is ever present in Islām and refutes its opponents by its illumined being.

Thus we have proved conclusively that as the Holy Qur'ān conveys one to the high grade of intellectual perfection, in the same way, one attains through it to the stage of perfection in conduct also. The lights and signs of being accepted by God have always appeared and continue to appear in those who have followed this Holy Word and not in others. For a seeker after truth this proof which he can observe with his own eyes is enough, namely, that heavenly blessings and Divine Signs are found only in the perfect followers of the Holy Qur'ān and that all other sects, who turn away from revelation, whether Brahmūs, Āryās or Christians, are altogether deprived of this light of truth. We make ourselves responsible for satisfying everyone who denies this, provided such a one, being eager to embrace Islām sincerely, should turn to us in complete good faith and steadfastness and sincerity for seeking the truth.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 350-352, footnote 11]

Prophecies in the Narrated Stories in the Holy Qur'ān

The stories set out in the Holy Qur'ān are in reality prophecies which have been stated in the form of stories. In the Torah, they are merely stories but in the Holy

Qur'ān, every story is a prophecy concerning the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and Islām and these prophecies have been very clearly fulfilled. The Holy Qur'ān is an ocean of verities, insights and prophecies. It is not possible that a person should believe fully in God Almighty except through the Holy Qur'ān. For this characteristic is special to the Holy Qur'ān that by following it perfectly all obstructions that exist between man and God are removed. Followers of other religions make mention of the name of God as a tale, but the Holy Qur'ān shows the countenance of the True Beloved and makes the light of certainty enter the heart of a person. God, Who is hidden from the whole world, is seen only through the Holy Qur'ān.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 271-272]

Uniqueness of the Holy Qur'ān in All its Qualities

The Holy Qur'ān is not matchless merely on account of the beauty of its composition, but is matchless on account of all its excellences which it claims to comprise and that is the truth, for whatever proceeds from God Almighty is not unique only on account of one quality but on account of every one of its qualities. Those who do not accept the Holy Qur'ān as comprehensive of unlimited verities and insights, do not value the Qur'ān as it should be valued. A necessary sign for the recognition of the holy and true Word of God is that it should be unique in all its qualities, for we observe that whatever proceeds from God Almighty is unique and matchless even if it is only a grain of barley, and human powers cannot match it. Being matchless means being unlimited, that is to say, a thing can be matchless only when its

wonders and qualities are unlimited and have no end.

As we have just stated, this characteristic is found in everything created by God Almighty. For instance, if the wonders of a leaf of a tree are investigated for a thousand years, that period would come to an end, but the wonders of the leaf will not come to an end. That which has come into being through unlimited power, must comprise unlimited wonders and qualities. The verse:

قُلْ لَّوْكَانَ الْبَحْرُ مِدَادًا لِّكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفَذَ الْبَحْرُ
قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا²⁶⁷

supports this, for the whole of creation is Words of God Thus this verse means that the qualities of creation are without limit and endless. Now when every created thing possesses unlimited and endless qualities and comprises numberless wonders then how could the Holy Qur'ān, which is the Holy Word of God Almighty, be confined to the few meanings which may be set out in a commentary of forty or fifty or a thousand volumes, or could have been expounded by our lord and master the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in a limited period? To say so would almost amount to disbelief, if it is deliberately persisted in. It is true that whatever the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has set forth as the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān is true and correct, but it is not true that the Holy Qur'ān contains no more than the insights that have been set forth by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Such sayings of our opponents indicate that they do

²⁶⁷ 'Say, If the ocean became ink for the words of my Lord, surely, the ocean would be exhausted before the words of my Lord came to an end, even though We brought the like thereof as further help.'—Al-Kahf, 18:110 [Publisher]

not believe in the unlimited greatness and qualities of the Holy Qur'ān. Their saying that the Holy Qur'ān was revealed for the benefit of the unlearned, further proves that they are wholly bereft of the light of the recognition of the Holy Qur'ān, and do not realize that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] was sent not only for the unlearned, but that people of all grades are included among his followers. God, the Glorious, has said:

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنِّي رَسُولُ اللَّهِ إِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيعًا²⁶⁸

This verse shows that the Holy Qur'ān was revealed for the perfection of every capacity. The following verse also points to this:

وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ²⁶⁹

The notion that whatever the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has said with reference to the Qur'ān cannot be exceeded is obviously false. We have established with conclusive and certain arguments that it is necessary for the Word of God Almighty that its wonders should be unlimited and matchless.

If it is objected that if the Holy Qur'ān comprises hidden wonders and qualities, then why were the earlier people deprived of their knowledge? The answer is that they were not deprived altogether of Qur'ānic wonders, but were bestowed whatever in God's design was needed by them of the knowledge of those wonders and whatever was needed in this age has been manifested in this age.

²⁶⁸ 'Say, O mankind! Truly I am a Messenger to you all from Al-lāh.'—Al-A'rāf, 7:159 [Publisher]

²⁶⁹ '...but he is the Messenger of Allāh and the Seal of the Prophets.'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

That which is the basis of faith, by knowing and accepting which a person can become a Muslim, has been proclaimed clearly in every age. I wonder wherefrom have these Maulavīs, who lack intelligence, gathered that God Almighty was under obligation that whatever of His favours and bounties was to be manifested in future must be proved to have existed in past ages also.

[Karāmāt-uş-Şādiqīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 7, pp. 60-62]

Standards for a True Commentary of the Holy Qur'ān

The **first standard** of a true commentary on the Holy Qur'ān is the testimony of the Qur'ān itself. It should be remembered that the Holy Qur'ān is not like other books dependent upon something else for proof or disclosure of its verities. It is like an orderly structure the whole of which is disturbed by the displacement of one of its bricks. It comprises no verity which is not supported by ten or twenty testimonies contained in it. When we interpret a verse of the Holy Qur'ān we should consider whether it contains other testimony in support of the meaning that we have adopted. If other testimony is not available and the meaning that we have adopted is found to be opposed to other verses, we should realize that that meaning is false for it is not possible that there should be any contradiction in the Holy Qur'ān. The sign of true meaning is that a whole host of clear testimony from the Holy Qur'ān should confirm it.

The **second standard** for a correct interpretation of the Qur'ān is the commentary of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. There can be no doubt that the person who understood the meaning of the Holy

Qur'ān best was our dear and grand Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. Thus if an interpretation by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] becomes available, it is the duty of every Muslim to accept it instantly without hesitation, and whoever fails to do this would be guilty of heresy and philosophising.

The **third standard** is interpretation by the companions of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him]. There is no doubt that the companions of the Holy Prophet [may Allāh be pleased with them], were the first heirs of the lights of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and of his knowledge, and that they were bestowed great grace by God Almighty and their perception was aided by God for they not only professed but practised.

The **fourth standard** is reflection upon the Holy Qur'ān with one's pure spirit, inasmuch as the Holy Qur'ān has a relationship with purity of spirit. God the Glorious says:

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ²⁷⁰

This means that: A person with a purified heart appreciates the holy insights of the Qur'ān on account of his relationship with the Qur'ān. He recognizes them and smells them and his heart bears witness that this is the true way.

The light of his heart is a good standard for testing the truth. Unless a person is purified in practice and passes through the narrow path through which the Prophets have passed, he should not become a commentator of the Qur'ān out of impertinence and arrogance, for his commentary would be based upon his opinion and such

²⁷⁰ Al-Wāqī'ah, 56:80 [Publisher]

commentary is forbidden by the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] who has said:

من فسر القرآن برأيه فإصاب فقد أخطأ²⁷¹

The **fifth standard** is the Arabic lexicon, but the Holy Qur'ān supplies so many means itself that it is not very necessary to have recourse to the lexicon, though it adds to one's understanding. Sometimes by having recourse to the lexicon attention is drawn to the mysteries of the Holy Qur'ān and a hidden matter is discovered.

The **sixth standard** of appreciating the spiritual system is the physical system, for there is complete accord between the two.

The **seventh standard** is the revelation and visions of the saints. This standard in a way comprises all other standards as the recipient of revelation is a complete reflection of the Prophet whom he follows, and with the exception of Prophethood and new commandments, he is bestowed everything that is bestowed on the Prophet. The certain and true teaching is disclosed to him and he receives everything by way of bounty and favour that is bestowed on the Prophet whom he follows. He does not indulge in conjecture, but speaks having seen and expounds having heard. This way is open for the Muslims for it cannot be that there should be no true heir.

[Barakāt-ud-Du‘ā, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, Vol. 6, pp. 17-21]

It should be remembered that we are not permitted to make any change in the text or sequence of any verse in the Word of God, except when the Holy Prophet [peace

²⁷¹ He who interprets the Qur'ān on the basis of his opinion is in error, even if he should put forward a commentary which he considers right. [Publisher]

and blessings of Allāh be on him] himself should have done so and it can be proved that he did so. In the absence of such proof we cannot disturb the sequence of the Holy Qur'ān, nor can we add anything to it. If we do so, we would be guilty of an offence and would be accountable for it.

[Itmām-ul-Ḥujjah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 8, p. 291]

Ten Systems of Roots in the Holy Qur'ān

It should be remembered that the **Holy Qur'ān** is comprehensive of ten systems of roots:

1. The system in which the existence of God and arguments in support of it, and such Divine attributes, names, actions, ways and habits are set out as are special to the Being of Allāh, the Glorious; also those phrases which relate to His perfect praise regarding His glory, beauty and greatness.
2. The system which is comprehensive of the Unity of God and arguments in support of it.
3. The system in which the qualities and actions, and conduct and habits, and spiritual and physical conditions are manifested by creatures in the presence of God Almighty in accord with His pleasure or contrary to it.
4. The system which contains complete guidance from God concerning admonitions and the teaching of moral qualities and doctrines, and the rights of God and the rights of His creatures, and wise knowledge, and limits and commandments, and directions and prohibitions, and verities and insights.

5. The system which expounds what is true salvation and what are the true means of achieving it and what are the signs and conditions of the believers and of those close to God who have achieved salvation.
6. The system that sets out what is Islām and what is disbelief, and what is *shirk*, and arguments in support of Islām, and answers to objections.
7. The system which refutes all the false doctrines of the opponents of Islām.
8. The system that comprises warnings and good news, promises and sanctions, world of the hereafter and miracles, illustrations and prophecies which foster faith, and such stories as serve to admonish, warn or convey good news.
9. The system that comprises the life history and holy qualities of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and his excellent example, and the arguments in support of his Prophethood.
10. The system that sets forth the qualities of the Holy Qur'ān and its effects and its characteristics.

These are the ten systems which are found in the Holy Qur'ān in their perfection like ten **circles**. In these ten circles, God Almighty has made use of such pure and distinct roots that sane reason immediately testifies that this complete and perfect system of roots was appointed in the Arabic language for the service of the Qur'ān. That is why this system of roots is in full accord with the educative system of the Holy Qur'ān, which is complete and perfect. The system of roots of other languages is not in accord with the educative systems of those books which

are called Divine, and which are said to have been revealed in those languages; nor are the ten circles mentioned above found in those books. It is one of the strong proofs of the deficiency of those books that they are deprived of the necessary circles, and that the roots of the language have not been able to keep company with the teaching of those books. The reason for this is that those books are not the **real books**, and served only a temporary purpose. There is **only one real Book which came into the world** which was to serve the welfare of mankind for ever. It was revealed with the ten perfect circles, and its system of roots is in accord with its **educative** system, and every one of its **ten circles** is accompanied by its system of roots according to its natural quantity and values in which distinct roots are appointed for the manifestation of Divine attributes, and for the explanation of four types that have been mentioned, and for every circle of teaching a perfect circle of roots is available.

[Minan-ul-Raḥmān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 9, pp. 150-152, footnote]

No Verity Left out of the Holy Qur'ān

It is my faith that the Holy Qur'ān is perfect in its teaching and that there is no verity that has been left out of it, as Allāh, the Glorious, has said:

وَكُرِّرْنَا لَكَ الْكِتَابَ تَبْيَاحًا نَاكِحًا لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ ۚ²⁷²

We have sent down to thee the Book which is an exposition of everything;

and again:

²⁷² Al-Naḥl, 16:90 [Publisher]

مَا قَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ²⁷³

We have not left out anything from the Book.

But I also believe that it is **not the function of every Mau-lavī** to set forth from the Holy Qur'ān all religious matters and to expound all its details according to the Divine design. This is the function especially of those who have been helped with Divine revelation by way of Prophethood or great saintliness. For those people who not being recipients of revelation are not competent to expound Qur'ānic insights, the only straight way is that without attempting to interpret the Qur'ān, they should unhesitatingly accept all the teachings which have been handed down by tradition. Those who are illumined with the light of saintly revelation are included *among the purified*. Regarding them it is the way of Allāh that from time to time He discloses to them the hidden fine points of the Holy Qur'ān and makes it clear to them that the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] has not put forth any extra teaching on his own and that the true *Aḥādīth* only set forth the details of the principles and directives contained in the Holy Qur'ān. By being vouchsafed this insight, the miracle of the Holy Qur'ān is manifested to them and the truth of those verses becomes clear to them in which Allāh, the Glorious, says that nothing has been left out from the Holy Qur'ān.

[Al-Ḥaḡ Mubāḥatha Ludhiāna, Rūḡānī Khazā'in, Vol. 4, pp. 80-81]

The purport of this verse is that:

هُوَ الَّذِي بَعَثَ فِي الْأُمِّيِّينَ رَسُولًا مِنْهُمْ يَتْلُو عَلَيْهِمْ آيَاتِهِ وَيُزَكِّيهِمْ

²⁷³ Al-An'ām, 6:39 [Publisher]

وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ²⁷⁴

The Holy Qur'ān has two great purposes for achieving which the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] came. One is the wisdom of the Holy Qur'ān, that is to say, its insights and fine points; and the second is the effect of the Holy Qur'ān which purifies the souls.

The safeguarding of the Qur'ān does not mean only that its text should be preserved, for this function was performed in early ages by the Jews and Christians also in respect of their scriptures, so much so, that even the vowel points of the Torah had been calculated. By the safeguarding of the Holy Qur'ān is meant both the safeguarding of the text and the safeguarding of the benefits and effects of the Qur'ān, and that can only be done in accord with Divine practice, if from time to time deputies of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] should appear who should enjoy all the bounties of Messengership by way of reflection, and who should be bestowed all the blessings which are bestowed upon the Prophets. This is indicated in the verse:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ
 كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ ۖ وَلَيُمَكِّنَنَّ لَهُمْ دِينَهُمُ الَّذِي ارْتَضَىٰ لَهُمْ ۖ
 وَلَيُبَدِّلَنَّهُم مِّن بَعْدِ خَوْفِهِمْ أَمْنًا ۚ يَعْبُدُونَنِي لَا يُشْرِكُونَ بِي شَيْئًا ۚ وَمَن كَفَرَ
 بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ²⁷⁵

²⁷⁴ Al-Jumu'ah, 62:3 [Publisher]

²⁷⁵ 'Allāh has promised to those among you who believe and do good works that He will surely make them Successors in the earth, as He made Successors from among those who were before them; and that He will surely establish for them their religion which He has chosen for them; and that He will surely give them in exchange security and peace after their fear. They will worship Me and they will not associate anything with Me. Then whoso is ungrateful after

This verse is explanatory of the other verse:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ²⁷⁶

and furnishes the reply to the question how will the Qur'ān be safeguarded? God Almighty says that He will from time to time send successors of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him].

[Shahādat-ul-Qur'ān, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 6, pp. 338-339]

Holy Qur'ān Possesses all True Signs of Divine Books

The certain and perfect and easy means whereby without any trouble, labour, obstruction, doubt, suspicion, error, or omission, true principles together with the arguments in support thereof, might be discovered with complete certainty, is the Holy Qur'ān. There is no other book or other means through which this great object might be achieved.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūhānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1 p. 77]

Now, O friends! I will describe to you the distinctive sign which sane reason has appointed for the recognition of a revealed Book is to be found only in the Holy Book of God Almighty, which is the Holy Qur'ān. In this age all those qualities which should be found as a distinctive sign of God's Book are absent in other books. It is possible that they might have possessed those qualities in an earlier age, but they do not possess them now, and though, for the reason that we have set out, we regard them as revealed, yet even if they are revealed, in their

that, they will be the rebellious.'—Al-Nūr, 24:56 [Publisher]

²⁷⁶ 'We Ourselves have sent down this Reminder and We shall surely safeguard it.'—Al-Ḥijr, 15:10 [Publisher]

present condition they are not of any use. They are like a citadel which is empty and in ruins, and bereft of all wealth and military strength.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, p. 402]

If an opponent of Islām should object that to hold the Holy Qur'ān as being better and superior to all revealed Books would mean that other revealed Books are of an inferior quality, while they are the word of the same One God, and there cannot be superiority and inferiority between them, the answer would be that from the point of view of revelation all Books are doubtlessly equal, but some are superior to others on account of the quantum of their contents and the perfection of matters relating to the faith contained therein. From this point of view, the Holy Qur'ān is superior to all Books inasmuch as other Books do not contain as much of these matters as are necessary for perfecting the religion, as, for instance, questions relating to the Unity of God, and the negation of all types of *shirk*, and remedies for spiritual ills, and arguments for the rejection of false religions, and the proof of true doctrines, that are set out forcefully in the Holy Qur'ān.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, p. 74, footnote 2]

Unity of God in the Holy Qur'ān vs. the Torah

The claim of the Christian missionaries that the Qur'ān does not set forth anything new on the Unity of God and on Divine commandments which is not contained in the Torah, is altogether false. An ignorant person reading the Torah might fall into the error that it sets forth the Unity of God, and directions with regard to worship, and the rights of mankind, and that there is nothing new which has been set out in the Qur'ān, but only a person who has not pondered the Word of God would fall into this error.

There is a great part of matters Divine that finds no mention in the Torah; for instance, it does not mention the finer stages of the Unity of God. The Qur'ān discloses that the Unity of God does not mean merely that we should not worship idols, or human beings, or animals, or the elements, or heavenly bodies or satans, but that the Unity of God has three stages.

The first stage of the Unity of God is for the common people who desire to be delivered from the wrath of God Almighty.

The second stage is for those who desire to be closer to God than the common people.

The third stage is for those special ones who desire to achieve closeness to perfection.

The first stage is that no one should be worshipped except God, and that one should refrain from the worship of everything that is limited and created, whether it is on the earth or in heaven.

The second stage of the Unity of God is that in one's own affairs and in the affairs of others, God Almighty should be regarded as the true force and that means should not be so emphasised as to become associates of God. For instance, to say that had it not been for X one would have suffered a certain loss, or that if it had not been for Y, one would have been ruined, would amount to *shirk*, if by such pronouncements it is meant that X and Y truly possess some power.

The third stage of the Unity of God is to exclude the desires of one's ego from one's love of God Almighty and to devote oneself entirely to His Greatness.

Such Unity of God is not to be found in the Torah. Also

there is no mention of salvation or hell in the Torah, except some slight indications here and there. In the same way, there is no detailed mention in the Torah of the perfect attributes of God Almighty. Had the Torah contained any *Sūrah* like the one in the Holy Qur'ān:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۖ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ ۝²⁷⁷

then perhaps the Christians might have refrained from the worship of a creature. Also the Torah has not set forth the degrees of rights but the Qur'ān has set forth this teaching also in perfection. For instance, it says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ²⁷⁸

Allāh enjoins equity, benevolence and graciousness between kindred.

This means that our sympathy with mankind should be prompted by natural eagerness and not by any motive of seeking acknowledgement, as for instance, a mother has sympathy for her child. The Torah also fails to establish the existence of God and His Unity and His perfect attributes on the basis of reason, but the Holy Qur'ān has established all these doctrines and the need of revelation and Prophethood with arguments based on reason, and by stating everything in a philosophic way, has made it easy for seekers after truth to appreciate it. These arguments are put forth in such an excellent manner in the Holy Qur'ān that it is not within anyone's power, for instance, to put forth any argument on the existence of God which

²⁷⁷ 'Proclaim: He is Allāh, the Single Allāh, the Self-Existing and Besought of all. He begets not nor is He begotten; and there is no one like unto Him.'—Al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:2-5 [Publisher]

²⁷⁸ Al-Naḥl, 16:91 [Publisher]

is not contained in the Qur'ān.

A strong argument in support of the need of the Holy Qur'ān is that all the previous Books beginning with the Torah and ending with the Gospel are addressed to a particular people, namely, the children of Israel and state in clear words that the directions contained in them are not for the general benefit, and are limited to the children of Israel. But the Holy Qur'ān aims at the reform of the whole world and is not addressed to any particular people but states plainly that it has been revealed for the benefit of the whole of mankind and that the reform of everyone is its purpose.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 13, pp. 83-85]

The Holy Qur'ān vs. the Gospels (Urdū Poem)

O Christians! Come this way;
See the light of the True God, and find the true path.

Can you show us in the Gospels
The numberless qualities present in the Qur'ān?

Remember! There is the Creator above you,
Do not just go about misleading His creation.

How long will you continue to love falsehood,
Do try truthfulness for a change.

People! Have some fear of God,
Have some modesty before Him.

The pleasures and delights of this life are not forever;
Dears! This is not a place to live in forever.

No one has ever stayed here forever.
Nor is this an eternal world....

My dear people, listen! Without the Qur'ān,
Man can never find the True God.

Those who have no knowledge of this Light,
Cannot behold the Beloved.

The influence of the *Furqān* is indeed marvellous:
It turns one into a lover of the Beloved God....
Hear from me of the beauty of the charming beloved;
Hear from me the charm of its beautiful countenance.

If you do not have eyes, at least you have ears;
If not, it might as well serve as a trial for you.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol.1, pp. 298-300]

The Qur'ān is filled with deep wisdom. In all its teachings and in its instructions with regard to true virtue it goes beyond the Bible. The lamp for beholding the true and unchangeable God is in the hand of the Qur'ān. **Had the Qur'ān not come**, God knows how many creatures might have been worshipped in the world. So all praise is due to God that the Unity of God which had disappeared from the world, has been re-established by the Qur'ān.

[Toḥfah Qaişariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 12, p.282]

Holy Qur'ān brings full accord between Science and Religion

The Holy Qur'ān is a Book so **full of wisdom** that it has brought out the **accord between the principles** of spiritual medicine, that is to say, the principles of religion which are truly spiritual medicine, and physical medicine, and this accord is so fine that it opens the **doors** of hundreds of insights and verities. It is only that person who can interpret the Holy Qur'ān truly and perfectly, who ponders the principles laid down by the Holy Qur'ān in the light of the system of physical medicine. On one occasion I was shown in a vision some books of expert physicians which contained a discussion of the principles

of physical medicine, among which was included the book of the expert Physician Qarshī, and it was indicated to me that these Books contained a commentary on the Holy Qur'ān. This shows that there is a deep relationship between the science of bodies and the science of religion and that they confirm each other. When I looked at the Holy Qur'ān, keeping in mind the books that dealt with physical medicine, I discovered that the Holy Qur'ān sets out in an excellent manner the principles of physical medicine.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 102-103]

Holy Qur'ān – the Universal Book

The Book that would have been revealed at the beginning of creation could not, according to reason, be a perfect Book. It would be like a teacher who teaches children the alphabet. It is obvious that for such elementary instruction, no great ability is needed. When human experience increased and man fell into many errors, detailed instruction became necessary especially when the darkness of error became widespread and human souls became involved in diverse types of intellectual and practical misguidance. At that time a superior and perfect teaching was needed and that came in the Holy Qur'ān. In the beginning instruction of a high grade was not needed for human souls were simple and no darkness or misguidance had settled on them. Superior teaching was needed in the book which appeared at the time of extreme misguidance and came for the reform of the people whose false doctrines had become confirmed and whose evil conduct had become a habit.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, p. 70, footnote]

It is true that man was bestowed a revealed Book in the beginning of creation, but that Book was not the Vedās. To attribute the current Vedās to God Almighty, is to offer an **insult** to the Holy Being. If it is asked why was only one **revealed Book** given to mankind in the beginning and why was not each people given a separate book, the answer is that in the beginning mankind's number was small and they did not amount even to a people, and one Book was sufficient for them. When mankind spread over the earth and the dwellers of each region of the earth became a people, and on account of long distances one people ceased to be in touch with another, Divine wisdom demanded that at such time there should be separate **Messengers** and **revealed Books** for different peoples, and so it came about. When mankind increased in numbers still more and communications were established, and means of communication became available, and it became known that different parts of the earth were inhabited by man, and God Almighty determined that they should all be made one people, and should be gathered together after their dispersal, God sent **one Book** for all regions. In this Book it was commanded that as it reached different parts of the world, it should be accepted and believed in. **That Book is the Holy Qur'ān** which has been revealed to establish a relationship between different regions.

The books that were revealed before the Qur'ān were confined to one people each. Books and Messengers appeared among the Syrians, Persians, Indians, Chinese, Egyptians and Romans and they were each confined to one people and were not concerned with the others. Last of all came the Holy Qur'ān which is a **universal Book** and is not for any one people, but for all peoples. It came

for a **people** who were henceforth to become one. Now means have become available which are bestowing a **unity** upon different peoples. Mutual intercourse which is at the root of converting mankind into one people has become so easy that a journey that used to take years can now be accomplished within a few days, and such facilities have become available for communication that news that took a year to travel from one far country to another can now be transmitted within an hour. **So great a revolution** is in progress, and the river of **culture** is flowing in such manner, that it appears obvious that God Almighty has determined that all the peoples who are scattered in the earth should be **made into one people** and that those who had been separated over thousands of years might now come together. This is intimated in the Holy Qur'ān and the Holy Qur'ān alone claims that it has **come for all the peoples of the world**, as it is said:

قُلْ يَٰٓأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ رَّبِّي رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ اِلَيْكُمْ جَمِيْعًا ²⁷⁹

Proclaim to the people: "I am Allāh's Messenger to you all".

Again it is said:

وَمَا اَرْسَلْنَاكَ اِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ ²⁸⁰

I have sent thee as a mercy for all the peoples.

And it is said:

لِيَكُوْنُ لِلْعٰلَمِيْنَ تَذْوِيْرًا ²⁸¹

We have sent thee so that thou shouldst be a Warner for all peoples.

²⁷⁹ Al-A'rāf, 7:159 [Publisher]

²⁸⁰ Al-Anbiyā', 21:108 [Publisher]

²⁸¹ Al-Furqān, 25:2 [Publisher]

I declare with all the emphasis at my command, that no revealed Book made this claim before the Holy Qur'ān. Each confined its message to its own people. Even the Prophet who was deified by the Christians affirmed: "I have not been sent but to the lost sheep of Israel."²⁸²

The conditions of the world also bear testimony that the claim of the Holy Qur'ān of a **universal message** was timely for at the time of the advent of the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him], the door of general propagation of the truth had been opened.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 23, pp. 74-77]

Safeguarding of the Holy Qur'ān

There is a promise in the Holy Qur'ān that God would safeguard Islām at the time of trials and dangers as is said:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ²⁸³

According to this promise God Almighty safeguarded His word in four ways. First, by means of those who have committed the Holy Qur'ān to memory, its text and sequence were safeguarded. In each century there have been hundreds of thousands of people who had committed this Holy Word to memory and thus safeguarded it in such a way that if they were asked about one word they could recite its context. In this way, the Holy Qur'ān was safeguarded against verbal perversion in every age. Secondly, through great divines who were bestowed an understanding of the Qur'ān in every century, who interpreted the Qur'ān with the help of the *Aḥādīth*, and thus

²⁸² Matthew 15:24 [Publisher]

²⁸³ 'We Ourselves have sent down this Admonition and We shall surely safeguard it.'—Al-Ḥijr, 15:10 [Publisher]

safeguarded the Holy Word of God and its holy teaching against the perversion of its meaning in every age. Thirdly, through scholars who set forth Qur'ānic teachings in the light of reason and thus safeguarded the Holy Word of God against the attacks of short-sighted philosophers. Fourthly, through those upon whom spiritual bounties were bestowed who safeguarded the Holy Word of God in every age against the attacks of those who denied miracles and spiritual insights.

[Ayyām-uṣ-Ṣulaḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 14, p. 288]

Lest it should be imagined that the Muslims believe that revelation began with Adam and came to an end with the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] and that, therefore, after the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] revelation ceased altogether, it should be remembered that we do not believe like the Hindūs that God's Word was confined to that which He had already disclosed. According to the Islāmīc doctrine God's Word and His knowledge and His wisdom, like His Being, are unlimited. God Almighty has said:

قُلْ لَوْ كَانَ الْبَحْرُ مَدَادًا لَكَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي لَنَفَذَ الْبَحْرُ
قَبْلَ أَنْ تَنْفَذَ كَلِمَاتِ رَبِّي وَلَوْ جِئْنَا بِمِثْلِهِ مَدَدًا²⁸⁴

(Sūrah Khaf, Part Number: 16)

... If the ocean were to be used as ink for transcribing the Words of the Lord, surely the ocean would be exhausted before the Words of my Lord come to an end, even though We augmented it with the like thereof.

We understand the cessation of revelation with the Holy Prophet [peace and blessings of Allāh be on him] in the

²⁸⁴ Al-Kahf, 18:110 [Publisher]

sense that though the Word of God is unlimited, yet as the corruption for the reform of which the Word of God descended, and the needs that were fulfilled through revelation were limited, only that much of the Divine Word was revealed as was needed by mankind. The Holy Qur'ān was revealed at a time when all possible needs had become apparent and all moral and doctrinal and verbal matters and human conduct had been corrupted, and all kinds of excesses and vices had reached their limit. Therefore, the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān was all comprehensive. It is in this sense that the law revealed in the Qur'ān is perfect and final, and previous revealed laws are incomplete, as the evils for the reform of which previous revealed Books had come, had not arrived at their climax, but at the time of the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān they had reached their maximum. Now the distinction between the Holy Qur'ān and other revealed Books is that even if those Books had been safeguarded in every way, their teaching being incomplete, a perfect teaching, that is to say, the Holy Qur'ān would have been needed to be revealed; but no other Book is needed after the Holy Qur'ān as there can be nothing beyond perfection.

If it was to be supposed that the true principles of the Holy Qur'ān would be perverted like the Vedās and the Bible and associates would be set up with God Almighty, and the teaching of the Unity of God would be altered and perverted, and that the millions of Muslims who are established on the Unity of God would fall into *shirk* and worship of creatures, then in such case another law would have to be revealed and another Messenger would arrive, but all this supposition is out of the question. The perversion of the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān is not possible as God Almighty has said:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ²⁸⁵

(Sūrah Al-Hijr, Part Number: 14)

.... We Ourselves have sent down this Admonition and We shall continue to be its Guardian.

The truth of this prophecy has been demonstrated over 1,300 years. So far, no pagan teaching has found its way into the Holy Qur'ān, as it had into previous revealed Books. Nor can reason imagine any such contingency. Millions of Muslims have learned the Holy Qur'ān by heart, and thousands of commentaries safeguard its meaning. Its verses are recited in Prayer Services five times a day, and it is read every day. It is being published in all countries in millions of copies, and its teaching being known to every people are factors on the basis of which reason decides that in future any change or perversion in the text of the Holy Qur'ān is beyond the range of possibility.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 100-102, footnote 9]

Critique of Brahmū Samāj Answered

It is objected that all the verities of Divine knowledge cannot be comprehended in any one Book, then how can it be expected that imperfect books can guide a person to complete understanding?

The answer is that this objection would be worthy of attention if one of the Brahmū Samājists were to put forward on the basis of his reason some new verity relating to the recognition of God or other such matter which is not mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān. In such case the Brahmū Samājists could claim with pride that all the

²⁸⁵ Al-Hijr, 15:10 [Publisher]

verities relating to the hereafter and to the recognition of God are not comprised in the revealed Book, and that such and such a verity has been left out which they have discovered. If they were to do so, they might succeed in misguiding some ignorant persons. The Holy Qur'ān claims:

مَا قَرُّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۚ²⁸⁶

(Part Number: 7)

... That is to say: No verity relating to Divine knowledge which is needed by man has been left out from the Holy Qur'ān.

Again it is said:

يَتْلُوا صَحُفًا مُطَهَّرَةً ۚ فِيهَا كُتِبَ قِيسَمٌ ۚ²⁸⁷

(Part Number: 30)

.... That is to say: The Messenger of God recites holy scriptures comprising all perfect verities and the knowledge granted to people of the earlier ages and those of the latter days.

Again it is said:

كُتِبَ أَحْكَمَتْ أَيْتُهُ ثُمَّ فُصِّلَتْ مِنْ لَدُنْ حَكِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ²⁸⁸

(Part Number: 11)

.... This means that: This Book has two qualities: one is that the All-Wise One has set it out in a firm and well-argued manner, that is to say, in the way of wisdom and not merely as a story; and, secondly, it sets forth all that is needed about the hereafter.

Again it is said:

²⁸⁶ Al-An'ām, 6:39 [Publisher]

²⁸⁷ Al-Bayyinah, 98:3-4 [Publisher]

²⁸⁸ Hūd, 11:2 [Publisher]

لَئِنْ لَقِيتُمْ فُضْلًا ۖ وَمَا هُوَ بِالنَّهْزِلِ ۝²⁸⁹

That is to say: This Book resolves all the contentions that might arise with regard to the hereafter and is not just vain talk.

Again, it is said:

وَمَا أَنزَلْنَاهُ عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ إِلَّا لِتُبَيِّنَ لَهُمُ الَّذِي اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ²⁹⁰

(Part Number: 14)

.... That is to say: This Book has been revealed so that the differences that have been created by defective reasoning, or by deliberate excess, may be removed and the straight path might be indicated for the believers. There is also an indication here that the mischief that has been wrought by differences in human compositions can be set right only by the Word which is free from all defects. It is obvious that he who has been misled by words can be brought to the straight path only through the Divine Word. Indications contained in the law of nature cannot decide between differences of composition, nor can they convince a misguided one of his error. If a judge does not record the pleas of the plaintiff nor meets the objections of the defendant with strong arguments, then how is it possible that the parties should discover the answer to their questions, objections and pleas in the hints contained in his judgement, and how can a final judgement be propounded on the basis of confused hints which do not satisfy either side? In the same way, the commandments of God are conclusively established to the satisfaction of His servants when He informs them of

²⁸⁹ Al-Ṭāriq, 86:14-15 [Publisher]

²⁹⁰ Al-Naḥl, 16:65 [Publisher]

their error into which they have fallen by the false statements of people, through His perfect and true speech, and makes known to them their falling into misguidance by a reasoned and clear statement, so that if they do not mend their ways even after being informed and do not give up their error, they might be condemned to chastisement. Would it be just on the part of God Almighty that He should seize a person as an offender and should be ready to punish him, without proving the error of his arguments in support of his innocence by a clear statement removing his doubts by His express Words?

Perfect System of guidance of the Holy Qur'ān

Again it is said:

هُدًى لِلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْهُدَى وَالْفُرْقَانِ ²⁹¹

(Part Number: 2)

... This means that: The Holy Qur'ān has three qualities. First, it guides people to the knowledge of the faith that had disappeared. Secondly, it sets forth the details of such knowledge as had been briefly stated. Thirdly, it sets forth the decisive word concerning matters over which differences had arisen and thus distinguishes between truth and falsehood.

Concerning the comprehensiveness of the Qur'ān it is said:

وَكُلُّ شَيْءٍ فَصَّلْنَاهُ تَفْصِيلًا ²⁹²

(Part Number: 15)

.... Meaning that: All knowledge of faith has been set out in detail in this Book and it points out those means and teaches that perfect knowledge which should lead man not only to partial progress but to full development.

²⁹¹ Al-Baqarah, 2:186 [Publisher]

²⁹² Banī Isrā'īl, 17:13 [Publisher]

Again it is said:

وَنَزَّلْنَا عَلَيْكَ الْكِتَابَ تِبْيَانًا لِّكُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً وَبُشْرَىٰ لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ ²⁹³

(Part Number: 14)

Meaning that: This Book has been revealed so that every religious verity might be plainly stated and this perfect statement might prove the means of guidance and mercy for those who submit wholly to God.

Then it is said:

الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَتَزَكَّىٰ أَعْيُنُكَ إِلَىٰ لَبِئْسَ الْأَوَّلِينَ ²⁹⁴

(Part Number: 13)

.... This means that: We have revealed this magnificent Book to you, so that you may move people out of darkness into light. This is an indication that the Holy Qur'ān removes every kind of doubt that passes through a man's mind and puts down false notions, and bestows the light of perfect understanding; that is to say, it bestows all the insights and verities that are needed for turning to God Almighty and believing in Him.

Again it is said:

مَا كَانَ حَدِيثًا يُفْتَرَىٰ وَلَٰكِن تَصَدِيقَ الَّذِي بَيْنَ يَدَيْهِ
وَتَفْصِيلَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةً لِّقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ ²⁹⁵

(Part Number: 13)

.... This means that: The Qur'ān is not a Book which could be composed by man. The signs of its truth are patent for it establishes the truth of previous Books, meaning that the prophecies contained in the previous Books concerning the Holy Qur'ān have been fulfilled by

²⁹³ Al-Naḥl, 16:90 [Publisher]

²⁹⁴ Ibrāhīm, 14:2 [Publisher]

²⁹⁵ Yūsuf, 12:112 [Publisher]

its being revealed. Also the Qur'ān has supplied the arguments in support of true doctrines which had not been set forth in previous books and thus carried their teaching to perfection. In this manner the Qur'ān proved the truth of the previous books, which also establishes its own truth. It is a sign of its truth that it sets forth every religious verity and states all those matters which are necessary for perfect guidance. This is a sign of its truth inasmuch as it is beyond the power of man that his knowledge should be so comprehensive that no religious verity and fine truth should be left out of it.

In these verses God Almighty has clearly stated that the Holy Qur'ān is comprehensive of all verities and this is a very strong argument in support of its truth. Centuries have passed after this claim of the Holy Qur'ān, but no Brahmū or any other has come out to contest it. It is obvious that, without setting forth any new verity that might have been left out of the Holy Qur'ān, to put forward false notions like the insane which have no reality, is strong proof that such people do not desire to seek the truth like the righteous, but to please their evil-directing selves they are seeking ways whereby they should be freed from God's holy commandments and from God Himself. For procuring such freedom they turn away from the true Book of God, the truth of which is brighter than the sun, and they neither discuss any matter in the spirit of scholarship, nor listen to anything said by the other side. They should be asked when did anyone present a religious verity in opposition to the Qur'ān and found no answer from the Qur'ān? For 1,300 years the Holy Qur'ān has claimed that all religious verities are comprised in it. Then how vile it is that without a test such a grand Book should be held to be defective, and

what kind of arrogance is it neither to admit the claim of the Holy Qur'ān nor to refute it? The truth is that though their lips sometimes utter the name of God, their hearts are filled with the filth of the world. If they start a religious discussion they do not continue it till the end and cut it short lest a truth should be manifested. Then they describe this perfect Book as defective which proclaims:

أَلَيْسَ كَمَلَّتْ لَكُمْ دِينُكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي²⁹⁶

(Part Number: 6)

.... This day, by revealing this Book, I have perfected your religion for your benefit, and have completed all My favours for the believers.

Have you no fear of God? Will you go on living like this? Will your false mouths not be cursed one day by God? If you think that you have discovered a high verity after great labour, and research and you falsely assume that the Holy Qur'ān has failed to mention it, we call upon you to put aside everything else and present that verity to us so that we might exhibit it to you from the Qur'ān.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Vol. 1, pp. 223-227, footnote 11]

In Praise of the Holy Qur'ān

Beauty of the Holy Qur'ān (Urdū Poem)

The grace and beauty of the Qur'ān
Is the light and life of every Muslim;
The moon is the beloved of others,
Our beloved is the Qur'ān.

I searched everywhere,
Its peer could not be found;
Why, after all, should it not be unique:

²⁹⁶ Al-Mā'idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

It is the Holy Word of the Gracious Lord.

Every word in it is a living
And everlasting spring;
No orchard has such quality,
Nor is there a garden like it.

The Word of the Gracious God
Has no equal;
Be it a pearl from Ummān,
Or a ruby from Badakhshān.

How can the word of man
Equal the world of God?
There is divine power; here is helplessness;
The difference is so obvious!

In knowledge and eloquence,
How can man equal Him;
Before Whom even the angels
Confess ignorance.

Even the tiny leg of an insect,
Man can never create;
How is it possible for him
To create the Light of God?

O people, have some regard
For the grandeur of the Great Lord;
Hold your tongues now
If you have even a hint of faith.

To consider someone equal to God
Is an act of great infidelity;
Have some fear of God, dears!
What a lie and calumny this is!

If you accept the Unity of God,
Why are your hearts full of polytheism?

What veils of ignorance

Have enveloped your hearts!
 You are indeed guilty of an error;
 Desist! if you have any fear of God.

I bear no ill will to you, brothers,
 This is only a humble advice;
 My heart and life are an offering
 For anyone who has a pure heart.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 1, pp. 198-204]

(Urdū Poem)

The light of the *Furqān*²⁹⁷
 Is the brightest of all lights;
 Holy is He from Whom
 This river of spiritual light issued forth.

The tree of faith in divine unity
 Was about to wither away;
 All of a sudden, this pure spring
 Gushed forth from the unseen.

O Allāh! Your *Furqān* is a universe in itself;
 It contains everything that was ever needed.

We searched the whole world,
 We rummaged through all the shops;
 But we found only this one goblet
 Containing the true knowledge of the Divine.

The similitude of this light cannot be found
 In the whole wide world;
 For it is unique in every thing,
 And matchless in every quality.

At first we thought that the *Furqān*
 Is like the rod of Moses;

²⁹⁷ *Furqān* means: 'The one which makes distinction between truth and falsity'. It is another name for the Holy Qur'ān. [Translator]

Then when we reflected further,
And found every word to be a Messiah.

Blind as they are,
It is their own fault;
Otherwise this light has shone
As brightly as a hundred suns.

How pathetic is the life
Of the people in this world,
Whose hearts remained blind
Even in the presence of this Light.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol.1, pp. 305-306]

Source of Verities and the Sun of Truthfulness (Persian Poem)

Out of the holy light of the Qur'ān broke the bright day;
And the spring breeze started blowing upon the buds of
the hearts.

The shining sun does not have this light and brightness;
And such charm and grace the moon has never
possessed.

Joseph was cast into the pit alone;
Whereas this Joseph²⁹⁸ has pulled many a people out of
the pits.

From the Orient of Knowledge, it has brought forth
hundreds of verities;
The profile of the young and tender crescent is arched
because of its great delicacy.

Do you know how excellent is the quality of knowledge
it contains?

²⁹⁸ Joseph is renowned for his beauty. The purport of this couplet is that the Holy Qur'ān—this our Joseph—is not only a great beauty in itself, but it also is a saviour, whereas the man Joseph, despite his beauty, could not save himself from being thrown into a pit. [Translator]

It is heavenly honey dripping from the revealed word of
God.

When this sun of truthfulness appeared in the world;
Every owl that worshipped darkness, retreated into its
hideout.

No one can experience certainty in this world;
Except the one who takes refuge in its countenance.

He who is blessed with its knowledge, becomes a
treasure of knowledge;
He who is not aware of it, is like the one who knows
nothing of the world.

The rain of the grace of the Gracious Lord comes to
welcome such a one;
Unlucky is he who forsakes it and runs after others.

Inclination towards sin is nothing but a satanic taint;
Only him I consider human, who gets rid of all
mischiefs.

O mine of beauty, I know of your origin;
You are the light of the God Who created the universe.

I have nothing to do with any one else, you alone are
my beloved;
We have received your light from Him Who listens to
entreaties.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol.1, pp. 304-305]

Revelation from God (Persian Poem)

With the Divine word, the dawn of truth has broken;
The eye that has not seen those holy scriptures has seen
nothing.

The castle of my heart is filled with the fragrance of that
musk;
The beloved, who had left us, has returned.

The eye which does not partake of the light of the
Furqān;

I declare in the name of God, that it will never be
redeemed of its blindness.

The one who seeks the Divine garden but leaves the
Qur'ān aside;

We can swear that he has never even smelled its
fragrance.

I do not compare even with sun the light which I see;
Hundreds of suns encircle it in humility.

Unfortunate and benighted are the people,
Who turn their backs upon this light because of their
self-conceit.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in Vol. 1, p. 335]

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THE ESSENCE OF ISLĀM

VOLUME II

Extracts from the Writings, Speeches,
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Promised Messiah

**Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
of Qādiān**

[May peace be upon him]

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Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah

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1

ARABIC, THE MOTHER OF TONGUES

It is not true to say that language is the invention of man. Research has established that the inventor and the creator of human languages is God Almighty, Who created man out of His perfect power and bestowed upon him a tongue that he may be able to speak. Had language been the invention of man, it would not have been necessary to teach a baby to talk. It would have invented its own speech, as it grew mature. But it is patent that if a child is not taught speech, it will not be able to speak. Whether it is nurtured in a Greek forest or in the British Isles or at the equator, he has to be instructed in the art of speaking, and in the absence of such instruction he would not be able to speak.

The notion that languages undergo changes under human influence is an illusion. These changes do not result from conscious human effort, nor can we determine any rule or principle whereby the human mind brings about changes in languages at certain times. Deep reflection would reveal that linguistic changes also take place under the direction of the *Causa Causans* like all other heavenly and earthly changes.

It cannot be established that at any particular time the whole of mankind collectively, or its different sections separately, had invented the different tongues that are spoken in the world. It may be asked why should it not be supposed that, as God Almighty constantly brings

about changes in languages, in the beginning languages might have been originated in the same way without the need of revelation? The answer is that in the beginning God had created everything simply through His power. Reflection on heaven, earth, sun, moon and on human nature itself would disclose that the beginning and origin of everything was through the pure operation of Divine power, in which no physical means were involved. Whatever God created was a manifestation of His supreme power, which is beyond the concept of man.... The circumstances of today cannot serve as a precedent for the beginning and origin of creation. For instance, today no child is born without the agency of parents, but if in the beginning the same condition had been essential, man could not have come into being. Moreover, there is a world of difference between changes that naturally occur from time to time in languages and the birth of speech itself in the original void. The two concepts are entirely different.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 358-404]

Are Languages the Invention of Man?

Some ignorant Āryās, holding Sanskrit as the language of Permashwar, consider all other languages, which comprise of hundreds of Divine wonders and curiosities, as the invention of man; as if while Permashwar revealed one language, men invented scores of languages better than that one. We would inquire from the Āryās that if it is true that Sanskrit was issued from the mouth of Permashwar, and all other languages are the inventions of men and have no relationship with Permashwar, what are the particular characteristics of Sanskrit which are not to be found in other languages; for the speech of Permashwar must have superiority over the inventions of

men. He is called God because He is Matchless and Supreme in His Being, attributes and works. If we are to suppose that Sanskrit is the language of Permeshwar, which was revealed to the ancestors of the Hindūs, and that other languages were invented by the ancestors of other people who were cleverer and wiser than the ancestors of the Hindūs, then could we also suppose that those other people were somewhat superior to Permeshwar of the Hindūs in that they, through their perfect power, invented hundreds of languages and Permeshwar could invent no more than one? Those whose very natures are permeated with polytheism consider Permeshwar to be an equal entity with themselves in many respects, perhaps because they esteem themselves as uncreated and, therefore, partners in the Godhead. The objection as to why God did not content Himself with the creation of just one language, results from lack of reflection. If a wise person were to observe the diversity of modes and temperaments of people of different countries, he would be convinced that one language would not have suited all of them. The people of some countries can easily pronounce certain letters and words, but for the people of some other countries the pronouncing of those letters and words would be a great hardship. How was it then possible that the All-Wise One, loving only one language, should have ignored the principle of:

وَضَعَ الشَّيْءَ فِي مَوْضِعِهِ¹

and should have abandoned that which would have been appropriate for the diversity of temperaments. Would it have been proper that He should have confined people of

¹ Putting a thing in its proper place. [Publisher]

different temperaments in the narrow cage of one language? Moreover, the creation of a diversity of languages would have been proof of the multiple power of God Almighty. The praise of God offered by His humble creatures in a variety of languages is in itself a most attractive spectacle.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 447-456]

Announcement for the Book *Minan-ur-Raḥmān*

This book is a wonderful production to which we have been directed by some of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān which are replete with wisdom. Among its other bounties the Holy Qur'ān includes one whereby the true philosophy of the diversity of languages has been set forth, and we have been apprised of the deep wisdom underlying the source of all languages. We also learn therefrom how greatly those people are mistaken who do not admit that all languages **have developed under Divine direction**. In this book it has been established as the result of research that the Holy Qur'ān is the only revealed book which has come down in the language which is the mother of tongues, which has been revealed by God, and is the source and fountainhead of all other languages. It is patent that the whole beauty and superiority of a Divine book consists in its being in a language that has proceeded from the mouth of God Almighty and possesses higher qualities than other languages, and is perfect in its pattern. When we find such qualities in a language that are superhuman and beyond human skill, and of which all other languages are bereft, and we discover in it such properties as cannot be invented by any human intellect and proceed only from God's true and eternal knowledge, we are compelled to confess that such a language has proceeded from God Almighty. Our perfect and deep

research has revealed that **Arabic is that language**. Many people have spent their lives in such research and have made great efforts to discover which language is the mother of tongues, but as their efforts were not rightly directed, nor were they bestowed the relevant capacity by God Almighty, they could not achieve success. An additional reason was that they were prejudiced against Arabic and did not pay due attention to it. Thus, they failed to discover the truth. Now we have been guided by the Holy Word of God Almighty, the Holy Qur'ān, to the truth that the mother of tongues, to which the Parsees, the Hebrews and the Āryās have laid separate claims, is **Arabic**, and that all other claimants are in error....

Why Arabic is Superior to Other Languages?

In contrast with Arabic words, the words of other languages appear lame, maimed, blind, deaf and leprous, and entirely bereft of a natural pattern. The vocabulary of those languages is not rich in roots, which is a necessary characteristic of a perfect language....

If any Āryā or other challenger of ours is not convinced by our research, we wish to inform him by means of this **announcement** that we have set out in this book, in detail, the reasons in support of the superiority, perfection and excellence of Arabic which fall under the following headings:

- (1) The perfect pattern of the roots of Arabic words.
- (2) Arabic possesses an extraordinarily high degree of intellectual connotations.
- (3) The system of elementary words in Arabic is most complete and perfect.
- (4) In Arabic idiom, a few words convey extensive meanings.

- (5) Arabic has the full capacity for the exposition of all human feelings and thoughts.

Now everyone is at liberty after the publication of our book to try, if possible, to prove these qualities in Sanskrit or any other language.

[Dīā-ul-Ḥaq, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 250,320-321]

Characteristics of the Holy Qur'ān

The Holy Qur'ān is such a brilliant ruby and a glorious sun that the rays of its truth and the flashes that indicate its Divine origin are being manifested not only in one aspect, but in thousands of them. The more the opponents of Islām strive to put out this Divine light, the stronger becomes its manifestation, and the more it attracts the hearts of those who possess insight, with its beauty and loveliness. Even in this dark age, when the Christian missionaries and the Āryās have spared no effort to denigrate it and to bring it into contempt, and have on account of their sightlessness attacked this light in every form that could be employed by the bigoted and the ignorant, this eternal light has furnished every type of proof of its being from God. One of its grand characteristics is that it sets forth its claims with respect to its guidance and its excellent qualities and itself furnishes the proof of those claims. This grand characteristic is not possessed by any other book. Out of the reasons and proofs that it has set forth in support of its Divine origin and its high-grade superiority, one great proof is that for detailed exposition of which we have compiled this book. It is a product of the holy spring of the mother of tongues, whose water shines like the stars, slakes the thirst of those who are thirsty for comprehension, and washes out the dirt of doubt and suspicion. No previous book has set forth this proof in support of its truth. If the

Vedās or any other book has set forth such proof, then the followers of such a book should present the claim for such proof in the words of that book. The purport of this proof is that a comparative examination of different languages discloses that all languages are related to each other.

Further and deeper study establishes that the mother of all these related languages is Arabic, from which all these languages have emerged. A complete and comprehensive research then discloses that its extraordinary qualities compel the acknowledgement that Arabic is not only the mother of tongues but is a revealed language which the first man was taught by the special design of God Almighty, and that it was not invented by any man. This leads to the conclusion that Arabic alone is **suited for the complete and perfect Divine revelation**, inasmuch as it is necessary that the Divine Book that has been revealed for the **guidance** of the whole of mankind should be expressed in a **revealed language** which should be the mother of tongues so that it should have a natural relationship with every language and the speakers of every language, and that being revealed it should possess the blessings with which everything that proceeds from the blessed hands of God Almighty is invested. But as the other languages were also not deliberately framed by men and have all emerged under Divine direction from this holy language, and have been corrupted but are all the progeny of this language, it was not inappropriate that for particular people guidance should have been revealed in those languages. Yet it was necessary that the highest and most perfect Book should be revealed in Arabic because Arabic is the mother of tongues and is the true revealed language, having issued from the mouth of God

Almighty.

As this proof is presented only by the **Holy Qur'ān** and it alone claims to be from God, and no other Arabic book makes this claim, we are compelled to acknowledge the Qur'ān as manifestly proceeding from God and its being a **Guardian** over other books. Therefore, I have compiled this book so that with God's help I may establish the mutual relationship of all languages, and may thereafter set forth the proofs of Arabic being the mother of tongues and the true revealed language; and then, on the basis of the speciality that it alone is the perfect, pure and revealed language, should **expound** the certain and conclusive proof that out of all revealed books the Holy Qur'ān alone is the highest, most exalted, most complete, most perfect and *Khātam-ul-Kutub*, and that it alone is the **Mother of Books** as Arabic is the mother of tongues. In this research project we would have to pass through three stages:

First stage: Proof that all languages are interrelated.

Second stage: Proof that Arabic is the mother of tongues.

Third stage: Proof that on account of its extraordinary qualities Arabic is a revealed language....

The **interrelation of languages** has been established so clearly in this book that no further research in this respect can be imagined....

The second issue is that out of interrelated languages, Arabic alone is the mother of tongues, the proof of which has been set out in detail, and we have established that one of the special qualities of Arabic is that it possesses a natural pattern and displays the beauty of Divine manufacture in the same way as the other works of God Almighty. We have also established that all other lan-

guages present a distorted picture of the Arabic language. To the degree to which this blessed language has been preserved in those languages in its true form, to that degree they shine like a ruby and attract the hearts with their charming beauty. But to the degree to which a language has been corrupted, to that degree its beauty and attractions have been reduced. It is obvious that a thing that proceeds from the hand of God continues to display extraordinary characteristics so long as it retains its original form, and man is not able to produce its match. But as soon as it falls away from its original condition, its shape and beauty are debased....

The Arabic language operates like the wise person of refined taste who can express his meaning in diverse ways. For instance, a clever and intelligent person can sometimes accomplish with the movement of a brow, nose or hand that which normally requires expression in words; that is to say, he can convey his meaning through delicate nuances. This is a method also employed by Arabic. Sometimes by the use of the **definite article** it conveys a meaning that would need several words in other languages. Similarly **vowel points** often serve a purpose which would require long phrases in other languages. Some brief words have surprisingly rich connotations; for instance, *‘araḍtu* means ‘I have visited Mecca and Medina and their environs’, and *ṭahfaltu* means ‘I am accustomed to eating bread made of *Cheena*² and have decided not to eat any other kind’....

One of the characteristics of Arabic is that all the miscellaneous qualities of other languages are comprised in

² A kind of cereal. [Publisher]

Arabic.... Thus as careful study and deep research reveal that Arabic is comprehensive of all the miscellaneous qualities of other languages, it has to be acknowledged that **all other languages are branches of Arabic.**

Some people raise the objection that if one language is acknowledged as the root of all languages, it becomes difficult to accept that within three or four thousand years languages, which had emerged from one root, became so diverse. This objection is an instance of a fallacy upon a fallacy. In the first place, it is not definitely established that the world is only four or five thousand years old and that heaven and earth had no existence before. On the contrary, there are clear indications that the earth has been peopled since a very long time. Besides, distance in time or place is not the only cause of diversity in language. A powerful cause of this diversity is that every region of the earth affects the throats, tones and pronunciation of its inhabitants in a particular way in consequence of its latitudinal situation, or its juxtaposition *vis-à-vis* other planets, or on account of some other unknown causes, and these factors produce a particular form of speech. That is why the peoples of certain countries are not able to pronounce **Z** or **R** properly. As complexions, spans of life, manners, morals and constitutions differ from country to country, likewise speech also differs, for the same causes affect speech also; and the degree of difference is determined by the degree of the causes. This difference is not arbitrary but is determined by physical laws. Thus a change, which occurs in the shape, or manners, or morals, or thinking of people under the influence of earthly or heavenly causes, also affects their speech. If a foreign word or phrase finds its way into their language, they change it about. This is clear proof

that speech is affected by earthly and heavenly causes.

The Jews and the Christians are compelled to acknowledge that Arabic is the mother of tongues as the **Torah** clearly affirms that there was only one language in the beginning....

Some people raise the objection that the relationship of some languages with Arabic, for instance that of Hebrew, is much closer than that of other languages like Sanskrit or European languages. The answer is that despite this difference it has been ascertained that the elementary words and phrases of these languages have been derived from Arabic and have been further developed through natural changes.

Special Characteristics of Arabic

There are five special characteristics of Arabic, which prove conclusively that Arabic is a revealed language, which we shall expound in detail in their proper places. These are:

First Characteristic: Arabic has a perfect pattern of roots, which is suited to human needs. Other languages lack this pattern.

Second Characteristic: The names of God, and of heavenly bodies, vegetables, animals, solids, and human limbs in Arabic comprise great wisdom. Other languages cannot compete with Arabic in this respect.

Third Characteristic: The Arabic system of elementary words is perfect, and comprises all nouns and verbs of the same roots, and illustrates their mutual relationship by arranging them in a wise pattern. This characteristic is not found in other languages in the same perfect degree.

Fourth Characteristic: In Arabic idiom a few words

comprise extensive meanings. Arabic conveys extensive connotations through the use of the definite article and vowel points and sequence, for which purpose other languages have to employ several phrases and sentences.

Fifth Characteristic: Arabic possesses such roots and idioms as furnish a perfect means for the expression of the most subtle of human thoughts and reflections.

As we have undertaken to prove and illustrate all these special characteristics of Arabic, it is necessary that we should do so in Arabic, thereby furnishing illustrations of all of them in that language, so that we might require anyone, who may claim another language to be revealed and the mother of tongues, to illustrate these characteristics in the same way.... If we should be proved false in our claim that Arabic possesses those five characteristics to a special degree, and any scholar of Sanskrit or any other language should succeed in proving that their language partakes of these characteristics to the same or even to a greater degree than Arabic, then we make a firm and definite promise that we shall immediately pay him five thousand rupees....

What we demand from the advocates of other languages is that they should prove that their respective languages possess the qualities that we have established in the case of Arabic. For instance, it is indispensable that a language, which is described as revealed and the mother of tongues should comprise a full stock of roots, for the purpose of transmuting human thinking into words in such a manner that when a person should desire to make a detailed exposition of a subject, for instance, of the Unity of God, or polytheism, or the obligations due to God, or the rights of man, or religious doctrines and the

reasoning supporting them, or love and human intercourse, or rancour and hatred, or the praise and glory of God and His holy names, or the refutation of false religions, or stories and biographies, or commandments and penalties, or the hereafter, or commerce and agriculture and employment, or astrology or astronomy, or physics, medicine, or logic, etc., the roots of the language should be capable of helping him in such a way that there should be available a root against every idea that may arise in his mind. This is necessary so that it may be established that the Perfect Being Who created man and his ideas also created from the very beginning roots for the expression of those ideas. Our sense of justice would compel us to acknowledge that if this characteristic is found in a language—that it comprises in itself a beautiful pattern of roots corresponding to the natural structure of human ideas, and is capable of illustrating in words every subtle distinction between acts, and its roots are adequate to fill all the needs of ideas—then that language is, without a doubt, a revealed language, inasmuch as it can only be the act of God Almighty that, having invested man with the capacity of expressing a complex diversity of ideas, he should have been supplied with a stock of verbal roots corresponding to his ideas, so that the word and the work of God Almighty should correspond to each other at the same level. However, to possess the quality of utilizing roots in particular formations in the expression of ideas is not the speciality of any particular language. Many languages suffer from the defect that they are compelled to employ compounds in place of elementary words, which shows that those compounds were formed at the time of need by those who used those languages for the conveyance of their

ideas. Therefore, the language that is secure against such deficiencies, possesses the capacity of filling its needs with its roots and elementary words, and is capable of matching its words to the works of God Almighty—that is to say, to the upsurge of ideas at their proper level—would doubtless deserve to be called a revealed language in accord with Divine nature, on account of its extraordinarily high level and its possession of a speciality which is not shared by other languages. Honesty would require the affirmation that the language that is characterised by the high rank that it had issued from the mouth of God Almighty, possesses extraordinary qualities, and is the mother of tongues, is the only language which truly deserved that the highest and the most perfect revelation should be clothed in it. Other revelations are only branches of this revelation as other languages are branches of this language. Therefore, we shall at a later stage expound that the Holy Qur’ān alone comprises the true, complete and perfect revelation that was to be sent to the world. We shall also develop the thesis that, by acknowledging Arabic as a revealed language and the mother of tongues, not only must we acknowledge that the Holy Qur’ān is the Word of God, but we have also to acknowledge that it is the Qur’ān alone which is the complete, perfect and true revelation which should be designated *Khātām-ul-Kutub*. We will now proceed with the Arabic part of this book to demonstrate the system of roots and other qualities.

لَا حَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ إِلَّا بِاللَّهِ الْعَلِيِّ الْعَظِيمِ³

[Minan-ur-Raḥmān, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 9, pp. 128-142]

³ There is no strength or power except through Allāh, the Exalted, the Almighty. [Publisher]

Faculty of Speech is the Basic Reality of Man

It is necessary to point out that observation of **the book of nature** compels us to acknowledge that the principal sign of all that has been created by the hand of God, or has issued from Him, is that it serves to bring about the recognition of God according to its respective rank and station, and that it proclaims in its own peculiar manner that the true purpose of its creation is to serve as a means of the recognition of the Divine. This is confirmed by the study of the diverse species of God's creation. Thus as the Arabic language has issued from the mouth of God Almighty, it was necessary that it should also display this sign so that it may be established with certainty that in truth, it is one of those things which have proceeded solely from God Almighty without the intervention of any human effort. All praise, therefore, belongs to Allāh that the Arabic language displays this sign most plainly and clearly. As the verse:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ⁴

declares the true purpose of the creation of man and his faculties. In the same way, the same verity is established about Arabic, which is man's real language and is a part of his creation. There can be no doubt that the creation of man can be deemed complete and perfect only when it is accompanied by the creation of speech also. For that which reveals the true beauty of humanness is the faculty of speech, and it would be no exaggeration to affirm that humanness means speech accompanied by all its essentials. Thus the affirmation of God Almighty that He has

⁴ 'And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.'—Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:57 [Publisher]

created man for His worship and comprehension means, in other words, that He has created the reality of humanness which is the faculty of speech, together with all the capacities and actions that are subordinate to it, for His own service.

When we reflect on what is man, it becomes obvious that he is an animate who is completely distinguishable from other animates by virtue of his faculty of speech. This shows that the faculty of speech is the basic quality of man, and that his other faculties are its servants and are subordinate to it. If it were said that human speech is not from God Almighty, it would amount to saying that man's humanness is not from Him. But it is patent that God is man's Creator and is, therefore, also the Teacher of his speech. Of which language He is the Teacher can be determined by the consideration that it must be the language which can serve man for the purpose of the recognition of God, as the other faculties of man serve him according to the purpose of the verse:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِي⁵

We have already explained that Arabic alone possesses those qualities. Its service is that it possesses such power for conveying to man the comprehension of God as it displays beautifully in its elementary words the distinctions between Divine attributes, which is found in the law of nature. It makes manifest the delicate and subtle distinctions between Divine attributes which appear in the book of nature, and the proofs of the Divine Unity which are indicated in the same book, and the diverse

⁵ 'And I have not created the Jinn and the men but that they may worship Me.'—Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:57 [Publisher]

types of Divine designs relating to His creatures which are also discoverable from it, in such manner as to present a delightful picture of them. It illustrates very clearly the subtle distinction between the attributes and qualities of God Almighty on one side, and His designs and works on the other, which are testified to by His law of nature. It thus becomes obvious that God Almighty has created the Arabic language as an adequate servant for the manifestation of His attributes, works and designs, and for illustrating the accord between His words and His works, and has from the beginning appointed this language as the key for resolving the mystery of all that relates to the Divine. When we appreciate this wonderful and majestic characteristic of Arabic, all other languages appear to suffer from darkness and deficiency. No language possesses the quality, which is inherent in Arabic, that it serves as a mirror for Divine attributes and Divine teachings, and presents a simple reflective diagram of the natural pattern of all aspects of Divinity. When we observe, with the aid of sane reason and clear intellect, the division between Divine attributes, which is naturally reflected in the book of the universe from the beginning, we find the same division in the elementary words of the Arabic language. For instance, when we consider into how many aspects the mercy of God Almighty is elementarily divided, according to intellectual research, the law of nature instructs us that His mercy has two aspects: before any action on our part and after our action. The system of providence clearly testifies that Divine mercy was manifested for mankind in two aspects according to its primary division.

Two Aspects of the Mercy of God

First is the mercy which was manifested for man without any action having proceeded from man. For instance, the creation of the earth, heaven, sun, moon, planets, water, air, fire, and all other bounties upon which man's life and survival are dependent. Without doubt all these bounties are a mercy for man, which have been bestowed upon him without any right, through pure grace and beneficence. This is a grace which came into operation even before the existence of man who didn't even have to ask for it....

The **second type** of mercy is that which follows upon the good actions of man. For instance, when he supplicates God earnestly his prayer is accepted, and when he cultivates the earth laboriously and sows seed, Divine mercy fosters the seed, with the result that a large quantity of grain is gathered. In the same way, careful observation would show that Divine mercy accompanies every one of our righteous actions whether they are religious or secular. When we labour according to the laws prescribed by God, Divine mercy comes into operation and makes our labour fruitful. These two types of mercy are such that we cannot survive without them. No one can doubt their existence. These are the bright manifestations which support the whole pattern of our lives.

When it is established that Almighty God has caused the springs of two mercies to flow for our sustenance and perfection, and they are two of His attributes which are manifested in two aspects for the watering of the tree of our being, we must find out how these two springs are designated when they are reflected in the Arabic language. By virtue of the first type of mercy, God Al-

mighty is called *Raḥmān* in Arabic, and He is called *Raḥīm* by virtue of the second type of mercy. It is in order to illustrate this quality of the Arabic language that we have mentioned the expression *Raḥmān* in the very first line of our Arabic discourse. As the attribute of mercy by virtue of its elementary division comprises two types according to the Divine law of nature, the Arabic language has two elementary words for it.

A seeker after truth would find it most helpful to adopt as a criterion the Divine attributes and works that are visible in the book of nature, for the purpose of discerning the subtle distinctions of the Arabic language, and to seek for these divisions, which appear according to the law of nature in the elementary words of Arabic. Whenever it is desired to highlight the distinction between such Arabic synonyms as are related to the attributes or works of God, attention should be directed towards the division between those attributes and works which is exhibited in nature, inasmuch as the true purpose of Arabic is to serve Divinity, as the true purpose of man is **the enlightened recognition of God Almighty**.

The qualities of any thing can be appreciated only by keeping in mind the purpose for which it has been created. For instance, an ox is created for the purpose of ploughing or transport. If we overlook this purpose and seek to use it as a hunting-dog, it would fail utterly and would prove useless and valueless. On the other hand, if we try it in the field of its true purpose it soon proves that it carries a great responsibility within the system of the means of maintenance of human livelihood. In short, the worth of everything is proved by its being utilized for its true purpose. Thus the true purpose of Arabic is to illustrate the bright countenance of all manifestations of

Divinity.

As the proper carrying-out of this delicate and subtle operation, and to be safeguarded against mistakes, was beyond human capacity, God the Noble and Merciful revealed the Holy Qur'ān in the Arabic language, a miraculous illustration of the qualities of the Arabic language, and of the delicate distinction between the different elementary words, and the extraordinarily rich connotations of its compounds, in such manner that all heads bowed to it in acknowledgement. All these qualities of the Arabic language were not only acknowledged by the highest contemporary linguists, but their failure to match them established that human faculties are not able to set forth those verities and insights, to illustrate the true and real beauty of the language. We have learnt the distinction between *Raḥmān* and *Raḥīm* from the same Holy Book which we have cited, as an instance in our Arabic discourse. Every language contains many synonyms, but untill we become aware of the distinctions between them, and so long as those words do not relate to subjects pertaining to Divinity and religious teachings, we need take no account of them.

It should also be remembered that man cannot invent these elementary words, but once they are created by Divine power, man can, by study, discover their subtle distinctions and their proper use. For instance, the grammarians have not discovered anything new, nor have they framed any rules which other people must conform to; but, having studied this natural language they discovered that it was illustrative of a system of rules, and they proceeded to formulate those rules in order to facilitate the study of the language. Thus the Holy Qur'ān, by using every word in its proper place,

illustrated how the Arabic elementary words can be manipulated, how they serve the subjects of Divinity, and how subtle are their mutual distinctions....

The Connotation of Some Arabic Words

Now we proceed to set forth some of the connotations of another Arabic word which we have selected from the Holy Qur'ān and which is *Rabb*. This word occurs in the very first verse of the first chapter of the Holy Qur'ān where Allāh, the Glorious, says:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ⁶

Lisān-ul-'Arab and *Tāj-ul-'Urūs*, which are the two most reliable Arabic lexicons, have set forth that the word *Rabb* comprises seven connotations: Master or Owner (*Mālik*); Master or Chief (*Sayyed*); Regulator (*Mudabbir*); One who nurtures (*Murabbī*); One who safeguards (*Qayyim*); Bestower (*Mun'im*) and; Perfector (*Mutam-mim*). Of these seven, three refer to the personal grandeur of the Almighty. Of these, one is *Mālik*. In Arabic lexicon, *Mālik* connotes that He owns the universe and can use it as He likes. His ownership of it is not shared by any other. This word in its true meaning cannot be applied to anyone except God Almighty, inasmuch as full control and complete power of disposal and perfect rights cannot be attributed to anyone except God Almighty.

Sayyed, according to Arabic lexicon, is one who has subordinate to him a large number who should serve him out of sincere eagerness and natural obedience. The distinction between a sovereign and *Sayyed* is, that a

⁶ 'All praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2 [Publisher]

sovereign subdues people by his might and the strictness of his laws, while the followers of a *Sayyed* obey him voluntarily out of their sincere love and eagerness and inclination and call him '*Sayyedunā*' (our chief) out of sincere affection. A sovereign can be obeyed in that spirit when he becomes a *Sayyed* in the estimation of his people. This word can also not be used for anyone beside God Almighty, inasmuch as true and eager obedience which has no personal purpose in view cannot possibly be accorded to any beside God Almighty. He is the only One before Whom the souls prostrate themselves, for He is the true source of their creation. That is why every soul naturally bows down to Him. The worshippers of idols and of men have also the same eagerness to obey Him as has a righteous person who believes in His Unity, but they fail, on account of their error and faulty desire, to recognize the true spring of life, and on account of their blindness they direct their inner eagerness towards a wrong object. That is why some of them deify stones, or Rāmchandra, or Krishna, or the Son of Mary, under the mistaken belief that the object of their worship is the True God. They ruin themselves by investing creatures with Godhead. In the same way, those who pursue their own desires have been misled in their spiritual search for the true beloved and *Sayyed*. Their hearts also sought a beloved and a true Sayyed, but having failed to recognize the true desire of their hearts, they imagined that the true beloved and *Sayyed*, whom the souls seek and whom they are eager to obey, are the worldly wealth, properties and delights. This was an error on their part. The true Cause of spiritual desires, and the source of pious sentiments, is the Being Who has said:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ⁷

Meaning that: I alone am the Purpose of the creation of Jinn and men and all their faculties, which have all been created so that I should be recognized and worshipped.

This verse indicates that man, by his very creation, has been invested with the search and recognition and obedience of God. Had man not been invested with these, there would have been no pursuit of passion, no idol worship, and no worship of men in the world, inasmuch as every error results from pursuit of the discovery of truth. Thus God alone is the **true Sayyed**.

Another of these attributes is **Mudabbir**. This means the keeping in mind, with reference to every enterprise, the whole system of events in the past, and of consequences in the future, and the putting of everything in its proper place having regard to that system, and not to embark upon anything outside it. This attribute also cannot be applied to anyone beside God Almighty, inasmuch as perfect planning demands knowledge of the hidden, and that belongs to God Almighty alone.

The remaining four names—**Murabbī**, **Qayyim**, **Mun'im** and **Mutammim**—indicate those bounties of God Almighty which are bestowed upon men on account of His Perfect Mastership, Leadership, and Planning. **Murabbī** means he who nurtures, and perfect nurture means that all aspects of man, like his body, soul, faculties and capacities, should be nurtured and the system of nourishment should extend to the climax of man's physical and spiritual progress. The manifestation of the point at which the name of humanness or its elements begin, and its features

⁷ Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:57 [Publisher]

begin to move from nothingness towards existence, is also nurture. This shows that in Arabic idiom *Rubūbiyyat* has very wide connotations, and that it covers the whole expanse from the point of nothingness to the climax of perfection. The name ‘Creator’ (*Khāliq*) and the like are derivatives of *Rabb*.

Qayyim means one who safeguards the system. *Mun‘im* means one who bestows all bounties, which man or any other creature can receive, according to its capacity, and is desirous of obtaining, so that it might arrive at its climax, as Allāh, the Glorious says:

رَبُّنَا الَّذِي آتَى كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلْقَهُ ثُمَّ هَدَى⁸

Our Lord, Who invested all things with appropriate form and then guided them to the realization of their requisite goals.

Mutammim means that the system of beneficence should not be left deficient in any respect, and should be carried to its climax in all its aspects.

Thus the term *Rabb*, which has been used in the Holy Qur’ān comprises all the diverse connotations that we have set out briefly above.

We have to record with great sorrow that an ignorant European **Christian** writer has set out in one of his books that Christianity possesses this superiority over Islām, that it has named God Almighty ‘**Father**’, which is a very dear and lovely name, and that this name has not been applied to God in the **Qur’ān**. We are surprised that this critic has not considered what honour and greatness the lexicons have attributed to the expression ‘**Father**’, for

⁸ Tā Hā, 20:51 [Publisher]

every word acquires true honour and greatness from the position assigned to it by a lexicon, and no one is entitled to bestow such honour upon a word as the lexicon does not bestow. That is why even the Word of God does not disregard the lexicon, and according to all sensible people, in order to determine the honour and greatness of a word, recourse must first be had to the lexicon, in order to ascertain what robe of honour it has bestowed upon that word. Keeping this criterion in mind, we find that all that the lexicon discloses is that when a person is in fact born of the seed of another, and he who drops the seed has no further connection with his birth, it is said that that other is his *Abb* (father). If it should be desired to indicate that Almighty God is Himself the Conscious Creator of a person, and Himself leads him towards perfection, and out of His great mercy bestows appropriate bounties on him, and is Himself his **Guardian** and **Supporter**, the lexicon does not permit that these connotations may be expressed by the employment of the word 'Father'; the lexicon provides another term for the expression of this concept, and that word is *Rabb*, the true meaning of which we have just set out on the authority of the lexicon. We are not at all entitled to invent our own lexicon, and must follow the division of words established by God from the beginning.

The Word 'Father' is Derogatory to God

This would show that the application of the word **Father** to God is **disrespectful** and **derogatory** to Him. Those who have invented against **Jesus** the charge that he was in the habit of calling God Almighty 'Father', and in fact believed that God was his father, have been guilty of accusing him of a false and hateful offence. Can any

sensible person imagine that Jesus was guilty of such stupidity as to have applied to God, the Glorious, a name, the etymological meaning of which should be so low and humiliating and indicative of weakness, powerlessness and helplessness from every point of view?...

The word *Abb* (father) is so low and humiliating that it does not necessarily import any kind of design or nurture or love. For instance, a goat that covers a she-goat and drops its seed or a bull that satisfies its lust with a cow and then turns away from it without any thought of a calf being born of its action, or a pig which under the surge of its lust is constantly occupied in satisfying it and has no notion that through its repeated action whole litters of piglets might be born and spread in the earth, would no doubt, if its lustful activities produce its young, be called their father. According to all the lexicons the word *Abb* does not in the least imply that a father after dropping the seed should take any further action so that a child may be born, or that this should be his design at the time of cohabitation; indeed the word *Abb* does not necessarily imply desire for progeny, and all that it imports is that he should drop the seed, and it is only on that account that lexicographically he is called *Abb*. Then how can it be permissible that such a worthless word, which is so appraised in all languages, should be applied to the All-Powerful One, all of Whose works are manifested by virtue of His perfect designs, perfect knowledge and perfect power? How can it be right that the same word, which is used for a bull and for a pig, should be used for God Almighty also? What impertinence is this, which the ignorant **Christians** persist in committing? They have been left with neither shame nor modesty nor any understanding of human values. The doctrine of the atonement

has affected their human faculties like paralysis, so that they have been rendered utterly worthless and without feeling....

Here we consider it proper to dispel some of the doubts and misconceptions of Max Müller which he discusses in the first volume of his book on the science of languages.

His statement: One factor that has blocked the progress of knowledge is that some people, in order to expose other people to ridicule and contempt, employed contemptuous epithets to them, and thus failed to learn their languages. So long as the words wild and dumb (*‘Ajamī*) as applied to those people were not excluded from human dictionaries, and did not give place to the expression ‘brother’, and so long as it was not acknowledged that all mankind are of one species, a beginning could not be made with the science of languages.

My statement: The above statement shows that the writer is critical of the Arabs and imagines that the expression *‘Ajam*, applied by them to those whose language is other than Arabic, is used out of bigotry and contempt for those people. He fell into this error because his Christian bigotry stood in the way of his finding out whether the expressions *‘Ajam* and *‘Arab* were devised by man or by God Almighty. He has himself acknowledged in his book that man has not the capacity to formulate the elementary words of a language on his own. Arabic has two words in juxtaposition to each other. One is *‘Arab*, which connotes those who are eloquent and possess mastery of expression; and the other is *‘Ajam*, which means non-eloquent and tongue-tied. If Mr. Max Müller thinks that these two words are not ancient and Islām has invented them out of bigotry, he should specify the original terms which were used in these connotations, for it is not possible that a

people should not have had any appellation in ancient times. If it is found that these two expressions are ancient, this would mean that they were not coined by man, but that the Almighty, Knower of the unseen, Who has created man with diverse capacities, has Himself applied these two names to different peoples corresponding to their respective abilities.

Another consideration is that if these two expressions, *'Arab* and *'Ajam*, have been coined by some human being out of bigotry and contempt, then doubtless they would be contrary to fact and would be altogether false. But we have established in this book that the word *'Arab* expresses a reality, and that it is true in fact that the Arabic language, on account of its system of elementary words and its delicate structure and other wonders, occupies so high a position that one is compelled to affirm that in comparison with it other languages are like the dumb. Moreover, we observe that other languages are motionless like solids and are so bereft of any movement towards development as if they are lifeless, and we are compelled to acknowledge that they occupy a very low position. The Arabic language describes non-Arabs politely as *'Ajam* but in truth they did not deserve even this appellation. Had the low condition of their languages been correctly described the most appropriate expression to be applied to them would have been that they were dead languages.

[Minan-ur-Raḥmān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 145-161]

Glory be to Arabic, how beautiful is its countenance, looking out of perfectly illumined mantles! The earth has been brightened with its exalted lights, and it has been proved to possess the climax of the yearnings of man. In it are found wonders of the All-Wise and Powerful

Maker, as they are found in everything which proceeds from the Great Creator. Allāh has perfected all its limbs and has not left out anything from its beauty and splendour, and no doubt you will find it perfect in expression, comprising all the objectives of man. There is no action that begins at any period of time, nor is there any attribute out of the attributes of Allāh, the Bestower, nor is there any doctrine out of the doctrines of mankind, but there is in Arabic an elementary word apposite to it. Should you have a doubt about it, let us know the contrary.

[Minan-ur-Raḥmān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 193-194]

2

REVELATION, INSPIRATION, VISION AND DREAM

I tell you truly that every door can be closed but the door of the descent of the Holy Spirit is never closed. Open the doors of your hearts so that it might enter into them.

There is no safeguarding law through following which we can secure ourselves absolutely against mistakes. That is the reason why the philosophers, who framed the rules of logic and invented the methods of discussion and built the arguments of philosophy, fell continuously into error. They left as the legacy of their ignorance hundreds of false notions and mistaken philosophies and vain discourses. This shows that it is impossible to arrive at the truth of every matter and to determine the correct doctrines as the result of one's own research without making a mistake. We have never known any individual, nor heard of one or read of one in any book of history, who was free from error in the whole field of his vision and reflection. It follows, therefore, that it is basically impossible to find people who, through the study of the laws of nature and squaring their conscience with the circumstances of the world, carried their research to the highest level of truth, without any possibility of mistake....

Obviously, if man cannot escape error through his own knowledge and if God (Who is Gracious and Merciful,

and is free from every mistake and knows the truth of every matter) does not help His servants through His true revelation, how could we humble creatures emerge out of the darkensses of ignorance and error, and how could we be delivered from the calamities of doubt and suspicion? I, therefore, affirm with full conviction that the wisdom and mercy and sustaining love of God Almighty demand that from time to time, when He deems it right, He should create men who should be recipients of revelation for the purpose of ascertaining true doctrines and establishing correct morals, and who should have bestowed upon them the capacity of impressing their teachings upon others so that mankind, who have been created for true guidance, should not be deprived of their needed good fortune.

[Purānī Tehrīrain, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 20-21]

The Hidden World of Revelation

God Almighty has divided His wonderful universe into three parts.

- (1) The world which is manifest and can be felt through the eyes and the ears and other physical senses and through ordinary instruments.
- (2) The world which is hidden and which can be understood through reason and conjecture.
- (3) The world which is hidden beyond hidden, which is so imperceptible that few are aware of it. That world is entirely unseen; reason has not been granted the ability to reach it, except through mere conjecture. This world is disclosed only through visions, revelation, inspiration, and not by any other means.

As is well established, it is the way of Allāh that for the discovery of the first two worlds that we have mentioned He has bestowed upon man different types of faculties and powers. In the same way, the Absolute Bounteous has appointed a means for man for the discovery of the third world; and that means is revelation, inspiration and visions. This means is not allowed to be wholly suspended at any time; indeed, those who comply with the conditions for achieving it have, throughout, been its recipients and will continue to be such.

As man has been created for unlimited progress and God Almighty is free from deficiencies, miserliness and holding-back, it would be an unworthy thought that He put into the heart of man the eagerness to learn the secrets of all the three worlds and yet has deprived him wholly of the knowledge of the means of acquiring knowledge of the third world. This impels wise people to believe in the permanent need of inspiration and visions and they do not confine revelation, like the Āryās, to the four *Rishīs* beside whom it is impossible for a fifth person to arrive at that excellence. Instead, wise people, believing in the absolute bounty of God Almighty, deem the door of inspiration ever open and do not confine it to any country or religion. It is true, however, that it is limited to the straight path. By treading along this path these blessings can be achieved, inasmuch as it is necessary for the achievement of everything to follow the rules and methods which are necessary for its achievement. Wise people do not deny the wonders of the world of visions. They have to admit that the Absolute Benefactor, Who has bestowed upon man faculties and powers for the discovery of every little matter in the first world, would not deprive man of the means of discovering the

grand affairs of the third world through which a true and perfect relationship with God Almighty can be established, and true and certain understanding having been achieved, the lights of heaven become manifest in this very world. This method is also open, like the methods of discovering the other two worlds, and the truthful people adopt it with great conviction and follow it and obtain its fruits.

The wonders of this third world are numberless. In comparison with the other two worlds, they are like the sun as compared to a grain of poppy seed. To insist that the mysteries of that world should be wholly revealed through reason would be like shutting one's eyes and insisting that visible things should become perceptible through the sense of smell.

The wonders of the third world totally frustrate reason. No one need be surprised at the creation of souls for in this very world such mysteries are revealed to those who have experience of visions, that reason wholly fails to penetrate their reality. At times, a person who has a capacity to see visions can see someone from a distance of hundreds of miles despite numberless intervening obstructions. In fact, on some occasions, in a state of complete wakefulness, he can hear his voice also, and it is even more wonderful that sometimes the other person can hear the voice of the first one. On occasions, in a vision resembling the state of wakefulness, he can meet the souls of those who have passed on. As a general rule, meeting with all dwellers of graves—blessed or benighted—is possible in this manner. I myself have had such experiences.

This refutes entirely the doctrine of the transmigration of

souls current among the Hindūs. The greatest wonder is that sometimes one possessing the capacity for vision, through concentration, appears to another person, with the permission of God Almighty, at a distance of hundreds of miles in a state of complete wakefulness without his body moving from its place. Reason holds that a person cannot be at two places at the same time, yet this impossibility becomes possible in the third world. In the same way, a person of understanding witnesses hundreds of wonders with his own eyes and is surprised at the denial of those who altogether reject the wonders of the third world. I have witnessed the wonders and rare visions of that world with my own eyes approximately five thousand times and have experience of them happening to myself.

It would take a large volume to record details of these experiences. One wonderful aspect of these experiences is that some matters which have no external existence come into being through Divine power. The author of *Futūhāt* and *Fuṣūṣ* and other great *Ṣūfīs* have recorded a number of their own experiences of this kind in their compilations. But as there is a great difference between hearing and seeing, I could not have obtained that certainty by merely reading these accounts which I have acquired through my own experience.

I recall that in a vision I saw that I had drawn up with my own hand certain Divine decrees which related to the future and then presented the paper to God Almighty, the Omnipotent, the Glorious, for His signature. (It should be borne in mind that it often happens in visions and true dreams that some Divine attributes of beauty or glory appear in human form to the person seeing the vision and he imagines the form to be God Almighty. This experi-

ence is well known to those who are favoured with visions and cannot be denied). In short, I presented that book to that personification of beauty, which appeared as God Almighty, the Omnipotent, the Incomparable and the Unfathomable, in the state of my vision. On my presenting that document, God Almighty, Who appeared in the form of a ruler, dipped His pen in red ink and sprinkled it in my direction and with the ink that remained at the point of the pen He signed the document. Thereupon the vision came to an end and when I opened my eyes I saw several drops of red ink fall on my clothes and two or three of them fell on the cap of one ‘Abdullāh of Sannaur who was sitting near me at the time. That red ink which was part of the vision became materialized and became visible externally.

I have seen several other visions of the type which it would take too long to set down, but whereby my own experience confirmed that sometimes a matter that is observed in a vision assumes external form by the command of Allāh. These matters cannot be appreciated through reason alone. Indeed a person who is afflicted with the pride of his reason hears these things and affirms arrogantly that they are impossible and false and that the person who claims to have had such experience is either a liar or is mad or is self-deceived and for lack of proper research, has not been able to penetrate to the reality. Such a one does not reflect that these matters are testified to by thousands of the righteous from their personal experiences, and of which they undertake a demonstration to those who might keep company with them. Can they be set aside with mere verbal denials?

The truth of the matter is that, apart from the wonders of the world of vision, reason has not been able to compre-

hend fully even that which pertains to the world of reason and there are millions of Divine mysteries which are still hidden and beyond the reach of the wise.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 175-181, footnote]

Man's Ability to Receive Revelation

As God has invested man with the faculty of reason for the understanding, to some degree, of elementary matters, in the same way God has vested in him a hidden faculty of receiving revelation. When human reason arrives at the limit of its reach, then at that stage God Almighty, for the purpose of leading His true and faithful servants to the perfection of understanding and certainty, guides them through revelation and visions. Thus the stages which reason could not reach are traversed by means of revelation and visions, and seekers after truth thereby arrive at full certainty. This is the way of Allāh, to guide to which Prophets have appeared in the world. Without treading this path, no one has ever arrived at true and perfect understanding. But a poor dry philosopher is in such a hurry that he desires everything to be disclosed at the stage of reason. He does not know that reason cannot carry a burden beyond its strength, nor can it step further than its capacity. He does not reflect that, to carry a person to his desired excellence, God Almighty has bestowed upon him not only the faculty of reason but also the faculty of experiencing visions and revelations. It is the height of misfortune to make use of only the elementary means out of those that God has, out of His Perfect Wisdom, bestowed upon man for the purpose of recognizing God, and to remain ignorant of the rest. It is extremely unwise to let those faculties atrophy through lack of use and to derive no benefit from them. A person

who does not use the faculty of receiving revelation and denies its existence cannot be a true philosopher, whereas the existence of this faculty has been established by the testimony of thousands of the righteous and all men of true understanding have arrived at perfect understanding through this means.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 87-90]

Non-Prophets Can also Receive Revelation

Some ignorant clerics go so far in their denial that they assert that the door of revelation is altogether closed and that it is not open to a Muslim to enable him to perfect his faith through this bounty and then to act righteously under the urge of his faith.

The answer to those who think like this is that if the Muslims are so unfortunate and blind and are the worst of people, why have they been named the best of people by God Almighty? The truth is that those who think like this are themselves foolish and stupid. As God Almighty has taught the Muslims the prayer that is set out in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, He has also designed to bestow upon them the bounty that was bestowed upon the Prophets; that is to say, the bounty of converse with the Divine which is the fountainhead of all bounties. Has God Almighty merely cheated us with this prayer? What good can there be in a useless and fallen people who are even worse than the women of Israel?

Obviously, the mother of Moses and the mother of Jesus were both women and, as our opponents also believe, they were not Prophets. Yet they were favoured with Divine revelation. Is it to be imagined that if a Muslim were to have such a pure soul as that of Abraham and were to be so obedient to God Almighty as to cast aside

his ego altogether, and were to be so absorbed in the love of God Almighty that he should entirely lose his own self, yet he cannot be the recipient of revelation like the mother of Moses? Can any reasonable person attribute such miserliness to God Almighty? My only response to such people is:

لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ⁹

The truth is that when these people became the insects of the earth, and the only insignia of Islām left in them were their turbans, beards, circumcision, a few verbal affirmations, and mere formalities of observing Prayer and fasting, God Almighty deadened their hearts. Thousands of dark veils covered their eyes and they lost all signs of spiritual life. They thus denied the possibility of converse with the Divine. This denial is, in truth, a denial of Islām; but since their hearts are dead, they do not realize their own true condition.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in vol. 21, pp. 310-311]

O ye Muslims! Beware that such thinking is sheer ignorance and stupidity. If Islām is such a dead religion, whom can you invite to it? Will you carry its corpse to Japan or will you present it to Europe? Who would be foolish enough to fall in love with a dead religion that is bereft of all blessing and spirituality such as appeared in the religions of the past? In those religions even women received revelation, as was the case with the mother of Moses and the mother of Jesus, but your men are not equal even to those women. O ye stupid and blind ones, our Holy Prophet, our lord and master (thousands of blessings be on him) was ahead of all Prophets in his

⁹ Curse of Allāh be upon the liars. [Publisher]

spiritual grace. The grace of previous Prophets came to an end at a certain stage and now those peoples and their religions are dead. There is no life in them. But the grace of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) continues till the Day of Judgement. That is why it is not needed that a Messiah should come from outside for his people. To be brought up under the shadow of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) can convert a humble person into a Messiah, as **God has done in my case.**

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 389]

Revelation: the Highest Stage of Divine Understanding

Our claim is true and is clearly established that by treading along the straight path a true seeker can become the recipient of Divine revelation. My own experience testifies to it. Besides, every reasonable person can understand that there is no higher stage of the understanding of the Divine in this world than that a person should converse with his Gracious Lord—glory be to Him. This is the stage where souls are completely satisfied and all doubts and suspicions are removed. Having arrived at this stage of purification a person achieves the understanding for which he has been created. This stage is truly the key to salvation and to solving the problems of ephemeral existence. It proves how close the True Creator is to His weak creation. We have learnt of this stage by the light which is the Qur'ān. That light gives us the good news that the fountain of revelation never runs dry. Any dweller of the East or the West, when he searches for God Almighty and makes his peace with Him and removes the intervening veils in

between, will surely find Him; and when he finds Him truly and perfectly, then God will speak to him.

The Vedās have denied man this stage and have confined it to the four *Rishīs*, who, according to the Āryā Samājists, are the authors of the Vedās. This is an error of the Vedās like the other great errors contained therein. It is obvious that all human beings are alike in their nature and what is possible for one man is possible for all, and the closeness to the Divine and His understanding, which is permissible in the case of one human being, is permissible in the case of all, for they all have the same nature. It is true that there is diversity in respect of the degrees of excellence, but no one is shut out from the kind of excellence which is open to others. Should there be a person who should not have the slightest capacity to acquire human excellence then that person cannot be included within the category of human beings. In short, there can be a difference in capacities, but there cannot be a total absence of capacity.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 239-240]

The Gracious and Merciful Lord, Who has invested human nature with the hunger and thirst of His own complete understanding has endowed human nature with two types of faculties for the purpose of arriving at that understanding. One type is the intellectual faculties, the source of which is the brain, and the other type is spiritual faculties the source of which is the heart. The purity of spiritual faculties depends upon the purity of the heart. That which cannot be discovered through the intellectual faculties is reached through the spiritual faculties. Spiritual faculties can develop such purity that the graces of the Source of Grace can be mirrored in them, but the condition is that they should be eager for the acquisition

of grace and all intervening veils and obstructions should be removed so that they might become the recipients of the grace of perfect understanding. Their recognition of the Divine should not be limited to the affirmation that there **should be a Creator** of this universe. Rather, by being perfectly graced with the honour of Divine converse, they should be able to behold His countenance directly through having observed His great signs and should thus be able to see with complete certainty that **that Creator truly exists**. But as the nature of most people is not free from obstruction, they are afflicted with the love and greed of the world, pride, arrogance, self-esteem, hypocrisy, self-worship, and other moral delinquencies, and are deliberately neglectful of the obligations due to Allāh and to His creatures, and purposely turn away from sincerity and fidelity and love of God and devotion to Him, and cut asunder deliberately from God Almighty. On account of all types of obstructions, veils, desires and passions, they are not qualified that the grace of converse with the Divine should descend upon them which should exhibit the lights of their being acceptable to God.

Yet the eternal bounty of God, which does not wish that human nature should go to waste, makes it possible for most human beings to see occasionally true dreams or to receive true revelation so that they should realize that the way for their stepping forward is open. But their dreams and revelations do not indicate their being acceptable to God and are not accompanied by signs of the love and grace of God, nor are such people purified of the impurities of their egos. They see these dreams so that they might be furnished with an argument for believing in God's Prophets, for if they were to be deprived alto-

gether of the understanding of true dreams and true revelations, and they should have no certain knowledge of them, they could plead before God Almighty that they were unable to understand the reality of Prophethood for they had no knowledge of it. They had no sample of it before their eyes. Therefore, from the beginning it has been the way of God that irrespective of a person being good or bad or righteous or disobedient, or being the follower of a true faith or of a false one, he is shown true dreams or is vouchsafed true revelation so that his conjecture which derives from hearing of such matters may be converted into certainty and he may have a sample in his hands which should help his spiritual progress. The Wise Creator has so fashioned the human brain and has so invested it with the spiritual faculties that it can see some true dreams and can receive some true revelations. But these dreams and revelations are not an indication of any spiritual rank or greatness, but are only a sample of the way through which progress could be made.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in vol. 22, pp. 8-10]

The Necessity of Revelation

Arguments are of two types, inductive and deductive. An inductive argument enables us to recognize that which is indicated. For instance when we observe smoke we conclude that there is a fire. In the case of deduction, one moves from the conclusion to the cause. For instance, we find a person suffering from high fever and we believe that there is a cause for it.

We proceed to set forth first the inductive reason for the need of revelation. There is no doubt that the physical and spiritual systems of man are governed by the same

law of nature. We observe in the physical system that whatever needs the Gracious God has planted in the human body, He has also provided the means of their satisfaction. A human body feels hunger and needs food, so God has provided various types of food for the human body. In the same way, man needed water to slake his thirst and God Almighty has provided wells and springs and streams for that purpose. Man needed the light of the sun or light from some other source to be able to see with his eyes and God Almighty has provided light from heaven in the shape of the sun and has provided light from other sources on earth. Man needed air for breathing and hearing the voices of others, and God provided air. In the same way, man needed a consort for the propagation of the species; so God created woman as man's consort and man as woman's consort. In short, whatever desires God has planted in the human body, He has also provided means for their satisfaction. Now it is worth considering that when provision has been made for the fulfilment of the physical needs of the mortal body, how much more must have been provided for the fulfilment of the pure desires of the soul which has been created for the eternal love and recognition and worship of God. That provision is **Divine revelation** and Divine signs, which carry a person of defective knowledge to complete certainty. As God bestowed upon the body provision for the satisfaction of its needs, in the same way, He bestowed upon the soul provision for the satisfaction of its needs so that the physical and the spiritual systems should be in accord....

This inductive reasoning can be completed only through deductive reasoning, that is to say, by a sample of revelation itself. To feel the need for something is one

matter and to find its fulfilment is quite another.... You can see that both food and water are available for your body, not that they were present in some earlier age but not any more. But when mention is made of revelation you refer to a past age upon which centuries upon centuries have lapsed and you are not able to refer to anything in the present. Then how is there an accord between the physical and spiritual laws of nature? Stop and reflect. You cannot deny that the provision for your physical needs is available to you all the time, but you have nothing with you in the way of provision for your spiritual needs except stories of the past. You know that the physical **springs** from which you take the water to slake your thirst are still running; nor have your fields become barren and unproductive, the produce of which satisfies your hunger twice a day. But where are the spiritual springs, which used to slake your spiritual thirst by giving you the fresh water of Divine revelation? Nor have you available the spiritual food by eating which you could keep your soul alive. Thus you are in a desert where there is neither food nor water.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 63-66]

Urdū Couplets

What a pity! They say that revelation has come to an end;

Now this *Ummāh* will have to depend on old tales to the Day of Judgement.

Surely this belief is against the Word of God;
But who would shed the weight of this age-old yoke?

That God still appoints whomsoever He wishes to be a recipient of revelation (*Kalīm*);
He still speaks to whom He loves.

Why do you discard the gem of Divine revelation? Take heed!

For this alone is the source of honour and distinction for the faith.

This is the flower which has no peer in the garden;
This is the fragrance before which the musk of Tataristan pales into insignificance.

This is the key, which opens up the gates of heavens;
This is the mirror, which shows us the countenance of the Beloved.

This is the only weapon which guarantees our victory;
This alone is the fortress, the citadel of security.

In Islām, this alone is the instrument of attaining knowledge of the Divine;
Mere tales cannot help a person out of the raging storm.

Divine revelation alone is the sign of knowing God;
Whoever receives it, also finds the Eternal Friend.

How wonderful is the garden of love! the passage to which lies through the valley of death;
Whose fruit is the communion with the Beloved even though it is surrounded by thorny bushes.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 137]

Revelation is a message from the hidden, which does not depend upon any reflection or deep thinking. It is clear and open feeling as a hearer has about a speaker, or one beaten has about the beater, or one touched has about him who touches him. The soul does not experience any spiritual pain on its account. The soul has an eternal accord with revelation, which it enjoys as a lover finds pleasure in beholding the beloved. It is a delicious communication from God which is called revelation.

[Purānī Tehrīrain, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, p. 20]

What is Revelation?

By revelation is not meant something that arises in the mind as a result of thinking and reflection, like that which a poet experiences in writing his verses. He writes a verse and reflects about the next one and it suddenly arises in his mind. This is not revelation; it is a consequence of thought and reflection, which flows from the law of nature. Anyone who thinks about good things or evil things finds that something arises in his mind in consonance with his thinking and his search. For instance, a good and righteous person writes some verses in support of truth and another one, who is wicked, supports falsehood in his verses and abuses the righteous. Each of them will produce some verses and it should be no matter for surprise that the enemy of the righteous who writes in support of falsehood may, on account of greater practice, write better verses than the other one. Thus, if anything arising in the mind were to be called revelation, a wicked poet, who is the enemy of truth and of the righteous and always abuses the truth and indulges in imposture, would be deemed the recipient of Divine revelation. Works of fiction contain many affecting passages and the minds of authors are able to produce a series of writings on purely fictitious subjects, but they cannot be called revelation. If revelation were the name of any idea arising in the mind, a thief could be called a recipient of revelation for he can think of clever ways of robbery and ingenious plans of housebreaking and manslaughter cross his mind. We cannot call all this revelation. This is the thinking of people who have no clear notion of the True God, Who comforts the hearts with His converse and bestows the understanding of spiritual knowledge on those who are not familiar with it.

What is revelation? It is God's converse in living and powerful words with a chosen servant or with one whom He desires to choose. When this converse starts in an abundant and satisfactory manner and is free from the darkness of false thinking and is not confined to a few scattered and incomplete phrases, and is delicious and is full of wisdom and majesty, it is the Word of God by which He desires to comfort His servant and through which He manifests Himself to him. Sometimes a communication is made only for the purpose of a trial and is not accompanied by all the characteristic blessings of revelation. A servant of God Almighty is thereby tried whether by tasting a little of revelation he adjusts his circumstances to those of true recipients of revelation or fails to do so. Then if he does not adopt true righteousness, he is deprived of the perfection of this bounty and is left with only vain boasting.

Millions of good people receive revelation but they have not all the same rank in the estimation of Allāh. Even the Prophets who are the recipients of clear revelation are not all equal in rank, as God Almighty has said:

تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ ¹⁰

This means that some Messengers are superior to others. It shows that revelation is pure grace and is not the insignia of rank. Rank depends upon the degree of sincerity and fidelity, which is known only to God. Revelation when accompanied by its blessed conditions is also a fruit of sincerity and fidelity. There is no doubt that if revelation takes the form of question and answer in a proper sequence and is characterised by Divine

¹⁰ Al-Baqarah, 2:254 [Publisher]

majesty and light and comprises hidden matters or true understanding, then it is Divine revelation. For Divine revelation, it is necessary that there should be converse between the servant and his Lord as there is converse between friends when they meet. When the servant asks a question and in reply hears a delicious and eloquent speech from God Almighty, in which there is nothing of his own thinking and reflection and such converse becomes a bounty, then it is Divine speech and such a servant is dear to God. But this degree of revelation, which is a bounty, and is living, pure, clear, and unsullied, is bestowed only upon those who march forward in their faith, sincerity, righteous action, and also in what is simply ineffable. True and holy revelation demonstrates great wonders of the Divine. On many occasions, a brilliant light appears and along with it a majestic and shining revelation is conveyed.

What could be greater than a recipient of revelation conversing with the Being Who is the Creator of heaven and earth? The beholding of God in this world is to converse with God. By this, we do not mean that condition in which some odd word, phrase or verse might flow from the tongue of a person without being accompanied by a direct address. A person who has such an experience is being tried. He casts about like a blind one and does not know the source of the communication whether it is from God or from Satan. Such a one should have recourse to *Istighfār*. But if a good and righteous person begins to receive, Divine communication without obstruction, a bright, delicious communication which is full of wisdom, in majestic terms and in complete wakefulness, and there has passed between him and God Almighty a series of at least ten questions and answers in

the course of which God accepted his prayers a number of times and conveyed to him fine understandings and informed him of coming events, then such a person should be most grateful to God and should be wholly devoted to Him, inasmuch as God has of His pure grace chosen him out of all His servants and has made him heir to the righteous ones who have passed on before him. Such a bounty occurs rarely and is a matter of good fortune. Everything beside it is of no value.

Islām has always produced people of this rank and station. It is Islām alone in which God comes close to a servant and talks to him. He speaks inside him and makes his heart His throne and draws him towards heaven and bestows upon him all the bounties that have been bestowed upon those who have gone before. It is a pity that the blind world does not appreciate how near a person can approach to God. They do not step forward themselves and when some one steps forward he is either dubbed a *Kāfir* or is deified and is put in the place of God.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 437-441]

Revelation Provides Comfort in Distress

It is idle to assert that revelation has no reality and is a vain thing, the harm of which is greater than its benefit. Such an assertion is made only by a person who has never tasted this pure wine and does not desire to have true faith. Such a one is happy with his habits and customs and never seeks to find out to what degree he believes in the Almighty God and how far his understanding extends and what should he do so that his inner weaknesses are removed and a living change takes place in his morals, actions, and designs. He is not eager to

cultivate that love which should make his journey to the other world easy and whereby he should develop the inner quality of making spiritual progress.

Everyone can understand that this heedless life is ever pulling a person downward, with his relationship with wife and children and with the burden of honour and good repute, which are all like heavy stones pressing him downwards. He is in need of a high power, which, by bestowing true sight and true vision upon him, should make him eager to behold the perfect beauty of God Almighty. That high power is **Divine revelation** that provides comfort in distress. It enables a person to take his stand joyously and comfortably under mountains of misfortunes. That Imperceptible Being, Who confounds the reason and wisdom of all philosophers, manifests Himself only through revelation. He comforts the hearts of seekers and bestows contentment upon them and revives the half-dead ones by saying: **I am present**. It is true that the Holy Qur'ān contains all the guidance, but when the Qur'ān leads a person to the fountain of guidance the first indication of it is that he begins to experience converse with the Divine, whereby a revealing understanding of high degree and a visible blessing and light is created and that cognition begins to be acquired which cannot be achieved by blind following or through intellectual theories, for they are all limited, full of doubts, defective, and incomplete. We need to extend our cognition directly, for the greater our cognition the greater will be our eagerness. With a defective cognition, we cannot expect perfect eagerness. It is a matter of surprise how unintelligent those people are who do not consider themselves in need of that perfect means of approaching the truth upon which spiritual life depends.

It should be remembered that spiritual knowledge and spiritual understanding can be acquired only through revelation and visions, and until we achieve that standard of light our humanness cannot acquire any true understanding or true perfection....

Revelation is a Means of Salvation

We have been created for a great purpose, which is the true understanding of God; on that understanding depends our salvation. It delivers us from every impure and doubtful way and leads us to the edge of a pure and clear river. It can be **acquired only through Divine revelation**. When, being delivered entirely from our ego, we dive deep with an eager heart into an unattainable Being, our humanness, having appeared in the court of Godhead, returns with some signs and lights from that world. Thus that which the worldly ones look upon with contempt is the only thing which brings a long-separated one in an instant to his Beloved and bestows comfort upon the lovers of the Divine. It relieves a person suddenly of all types of egoistic limitations; until that true light descends upon the heart, it is not possible that the heart should be illumined. The imperfection of human reason and the limitations of current knowledge bear witness to the need of revelation.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 326-329]

OBJECTION. The belief that God sends down His word from heaven is utterly wrong for the law of nature does not confirm it, nor do we ever hear a voice coming down from above. Revelation is the name given to those thoughts which arise in the minds of wise people by the use of reflection and observation, and that is all.

ANSWER: A truth which is well established and has been

observed with their own eyes by numberless men of understanding, and the proof of which can be found in every age by a seeker after truth, suffers no harm by the denial of a person who is bereft of spiritual insight. If the thinking or defective knowledge of a person whose heart is wrapped up in coverings fails to confirm it, the truth cannot be considered as being outside the law of nature. For instance, if a person who is unaware of the power of attraction of a magnet, and has never seen a magnet, were to claim that a magnet is only a piece of stone and that he has never witnessed any such power of attraction in any stone, and therefore it is wrong to assert that a magnet has such a power for this is contrary to the law of nature, then would his assertion cast doubt on the well-established quality of a magnet? Certainly not. All that his assertion would prove would be that he is stupid and ignorant who considers his own lack of knowledge as proof of non-existence of a reality and does not accept the evidence of thousands of people who have experience of it.

It is not possible to hold that every law of nature should be capable of being tested by every individual. God Almighty has created the human species with great diversity in their overt and covert faculties. For instance, some people possess very good sight, others are weak sighted and some are altogether blind. Those who are weak sighted, when they find that those with good sight have perceived a thing from afar—for instance, they have sighted the crescent which they themselves are unable to see—they do not deny it and think that their denial would only expose their weakness. The blind, of course, have nothing to say in such a matter. In the same way, those who possess no sense of smell believe those serious and

truthful people who speak of good smell and ill smell. They do not doubt them for they know that so many people do not tell lies and must be speaking the truth, and that without doubt their own sense of smell is lacking and that is why they are unable to experience any smell.

Men also differ in respect of their covert capacities. The capacities of some are of a low degree and are covered up by veils. Some have from ancient times possessed high and clear souls and have been the recipients of Divine revelation. For the former to deny the personal characteristics of the latter would be the same as if a blind one, or one with weak sight, were to deny the observations of one with excellent sight, or as if a person lacking the sense of smell should deny the experiences of one with a sense of smell.

Then to convince a person who denies the existence of revelation, there are ways like the ways of convincing a person who denies the observations of the overt senses. For instance, if one who is congenitally bereft of the sense of smell should deny the existence of good and foul smell, and should assert that those who claim such a sense are liars or are mistaken, he can be persuaded to admit his mistake in the following manner. He should be asked to select a few pieces of clothing and should rub some with perfume and leave others untouched and thus test the sense of smell of a normal person, so that by repeated experiences he would be convinced of the existence of this sense of smell and that there are to be found people who can distinguish between that which is fragrant and that which has no smell. In the same way, the existence of revelation can be proved to the satisfaction of a seeker after truth through repeated experiments. When hidden matters and secret mysteries which cannot

be discovered through the experience of reason alone are disclosed to a recipient of revelation, and a revealed book is found to contain wonders which are not to be discovered in any other book, a seeker after truth realizes that Divine revelation is an established truth. If such a person possesses a pure soul, he himself, by treading on the right path can, to the extent of the illumination of his heart, have experience of Divine revelation like the *Auliya'*, whereby he acquires a certain knowledge of the revelation vouchsafed to the Messengers of God. For a seeker after truth who would sincerely express a desire to accept Islām, I am prepared to provide this means of satisfaction.

وان كان احدٌ في شكٍّ من قولي فليرجع الينا بصدق القدم
والله على ما نقول قدير وهو في كل امر نصير¹¹

Fine Thought is not to be Confused with Revelation

To imagine that the fine points that are disclosed to people through reflection and observation are revelation, and that revelation is nothing more than this, is an error due to ignorance. Were it true that human thinking constituted Divine revelation then man also could have discovered the unseen by the use of his reflection and observation. It is obvious, that however wise a person may be he cannot disclose anything hidden by merely reflecting on the matter. Nor can he exhibit any sign of Divine power. His speech indicates no sign of God's Power and, however much he might reflect, he cannot discover the unseen which is beyond his reason and

¹¹ If any one should doubt my word, let him come to me with sincerity. Allāh has the power to do what I say and He is the Helper in every matter. [Publisher]

observation and his other senses. Nor is his speech or composition of such a high degree that no one can compete with him. Thus, there are enough reasons for a wise person to conclude that whatever a man might think in consequence of his own reflection, or observation, cannot be the Word of God. Had it been the Word of God, a person would have had access to all that is unseen and would have been able to expound those matters the exposition of which depends upon Divine power, inasmuch as it is necessary that the Work of God and the Word of God should disclose Divine manifestations.

The Distinction between Creation and Command

It may be asked from whom and wherefrom proceed the good and bad designs that arise in one's mind as the result of reflection and observation? The answer is that such thoughts are the creation of Allāh and not His command. There is a difference between creation and command. By creation is meant that God Almighty produces something through physical means and attributes it to Himself because He is the Cause of causes. Command is that which proceeds directly from God Almighty without the intervention of any means. Revelation, which descends from God, proceeds from the world of command and not from the world of creation.

Thoughts that arise in peoples' minds in consequence of observation and reflection all proceed from the world of creation in which the Divine power operates behind the veil of means. God has created men in the world of means equipped with diverse types of powers and faculties and has invested them with the characteristic that when they employ their reflection in a good or bad matter their minds alight upon appropriate plans. As it is

part of the law of nature that when a person opens his eyes he can see something and when he directs his ear towards sound he can hear something; in the same way when he reflects on the way of success in a good or bad design, some plan arises in his mind. A good man by reflecting upon good designs, thinks of good things, and a thief, by reflecting upon the various ways of robbery, invents a plan to commit robbery. Just as a man can think of deep and devious evil designs, in the same way when he uses his faculty in a good way, he can think of good designs. As his bad thoughts, however deep and effective they may be, cannot be held to be revelation, in the same way his thoughts which he deems to be good are not revelation. In short, whatever good thoughts occur to good people and whatever bad thoughts or designs arise in the minds of thieves and robbers and murderers and adulterers and forgers as the result of reflection and observation are all the result of the exercise of natural qualities, and because God is the Cause of causes, they are called the creation of God and not His command. They are the natural qualities of man as in the case of some vegetables the quality of purgation or the quality of constipation and other qualities are natural to them. As God has invested other things with different types of qualities, He has invested man's power of reflection with the quality that it helps man whenever he requires its help in a good or bad design. A poet who seeks to lampoon anyone finds his mind working in that direction and he is able to produce such poetry. Another poet seeks to praise the same person and commendatory verses come to his mind. This kind of good or bad thought is not the mirror of the Divine will and cannot be called His word. God's holy word is the word which is far above

human faculties and is full of perfection and power and holiness. The very first condition of its manifestation is that human faculties should be entirely suspended and rendered useless. There should be neither reflection nor observation and the person concerned should be dead like a corpse. All means should be cut off and God Almighty, Whose being alone is actual and real, should cause His word to descend upon the heart of someone by His special design.

It should be understood that as the light of the sun comes only from heaven and cannot be produced inside the eye, in the same way the light of revelation descends from God and by His design and does not arise from inside a person. As God truly exists and sees, hears, knows and speaks, His word should descend from Him and should not be the product of man's mind. From our minds arise the same thoughts, good or bad, which dwell within us according to our nature, but God's limitless knowledge and boundless wisdom cannot dwell in our hearts. What greater denial of God could there be than for a man to think that all the Divine treasures of knowledge and wisdom and hidden mysteries are present in our hearts and surge up in them. This would mean that we ourselves are God and that there is no Being outside of us Who is Self-Existing and possesses Divine attributes, Who should be called God. For if God truly exists and His unlimited knowledge is special to Him, of which our hearts cannot be the measure, then utterly wrong and senseless would be the observation that God's limitless knowledge fills our hearts and all the treasures of His wisdom dwell therein as if God's knowledge is limited to that which is contained in our hearts. This would amount to a claim of Godhead itself, but is it possible that the

heart of man should comprehend all the excellencies of the Divine? Is it permissible that a particle should become the sun? Certainly not.

We have already stated that the characteristics of the Divine, like His knowledge of the unseen and His comprehension of wisdom and other natural signs, cannot be manifested by man. God's word should be characterised by God's Greatness, God's Power, God's Blessing, God's Wisdom and God's Peerlessness. All these characteristics are found in the Holy Qur'ān, the proof of which we shall set forth at its proper place.

If those of Brahmū Samāj still persist in denying the existence of revelation, which comprehends the unseen and other proofs of power, they should study the Holy Qur'ān with full attention, so that they should come to know that in this Holy Word surges a whole ocean of matters that are unseen and manifestations of power which are beyond the strength of man. If they should be unable, through lack of insight, to discover these Qur'ānic excellencies themselves, they should read this book of ours with attention so that they might discover as a sample some of the treasures of hidden matters and powerful mysteries of which the Holy Qur'ān is full.

They should also know that as proof of the existence of Divine revelation that descends from God and comprehends hidden matters, there is another way that is open and that is that God Almighty always creates from among the Muslims, who base themselves upon the true faith, such people who receive revelation from God and disclose such hidden matters the disclosure of which is not within the power of any one except of God, the One, without associate. God Almighty bestows this holy revelation only on those of the faithful who truly believe

in the Holy Qur'ān as the Word of God and act upon it with full sincerity and who believe in Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) as the true and perfect Prophet, who is better and higher and more exalted than all the Prophets and is *Khātām-ul-Rusul*, and accept him as their guide. Such revelation is not vouchsafed to the Jews and Christians and Āryās and Brahmūs, but has always been vouchsafed to the perfect followers of the Holy Qur'ān and is now vouchsafed to them and will continue to be vouchsafed to them. Though the prophetic revelation has been cut off as no longer needed, the revelation that is vouchsafed to the sincere servants of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) will never be cut off. This revelation is a grand proof of the revelation which is special to Messengership and humiliates every opponent of Islām. As this blessed revelation with all its blessing and honour and greatness and glory is vouchsafed only to those honourable servants who are included among the Muslims and are the servants of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), the followers of all other sects are deprived of this perfect light which carries the good news of nearness to God and of acceptance by Him and of His pleasure. Thus this holy revelation not only proves its own existence, but also proves that the Muslims alone are the people who are acceptable to God and who base themselves on the true faith, that all other people worship falsehood and are misguided and are under the wrath of God. Ignorant people will say all sorts of things on hearing this and will shake their heads in denial or will ridicule me like foolish and wicked persons. They should know, however, that denial and ridicule are not the way of those who possess nobility and are seekers after truth, but

are the way of those wicked people who have nothing to do with God and truth.

There are thousands of things in the world which possess qualities that cannot be understood by reason and are known only by experience. It is, therefore, the way of the wise that when some quality of a thing is manifested repeatedly by experience they no longer doubt its existence. He who persists in denial after repeated experience is an absolute fool. For instance, rhubarb is a cathartic and a magnet has the power of attraction and though there is no reason why they should possess these qualities, yet when repeated experience manifests that they have these qualities every reasonable person has to admit that rhubarb is a cathartic and a magnet has the power to attract. If anyone should deny this on the ground that there is no reason for it, such a one would be condemned as mad or insane. So we submit to the Brahmūs and other opponents that whatever we have stated concerning revelation, namely, that it is even now the experience of perfect individuals among the Muslims and is confined to them and is not to be found in any others, is not without proof, but can be demonstrated to every seeker through test and experience like thousands of other truths which are being discovered by these means. If anyone should be truly a seeker after truth, we undertake to demonstrate this to him provided he should make a sincere promise in writing that, in case of proof, he would accept Islām and should then turn to us with sincerity and in good faith.

فَإِنْ تَوَلَّوْا فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ بِالْمُفْسِدِينَ¹²

¹² 'But if they turn away, then remember that Allāh knows the mischief-makers well.'—Āl-e-Imrān, 3:64 [Publisher]

Revelation and Psychic Phenomena

Some people put forward the objection that there are many groups like astrologers, soothsayers, physicians, and palmists, who claim to reveal the unseen. Sometimes they foretell things, some of which come to pass, and that more recently some people have been able to reveal hidden matters through mesmerism. Then how could the revealing of the unseen be conclusive proof of the Divine origin of revelation?

The answer is that all these groups speak from conjecture, guesswork, and indeed from superstition; they possess no certain knowledge nor do they claim to have certain knowledge. Their so-called prophecies are based upon signs and doubtful indications which have no relationship with certainty and which are not above suspicion and error. Very often, their predictions are proved baseless and false, on account of which those predictions lack all honour and acceptance and helpfulness and success. Those who indulge in those predictions are generally poverty-stricken and unfortunate, are held in no honour, and are coward, mean, unsuccessful and without any merit. They cannot convert the unseen to come into accord with their predictions and in their own circumstances they exhibit the signs of Divine wrath and they possess no blessing or honour or help from the Divine. But the Prophets and *Auliya'* do not merely disclose the unseen like the astrologers, but with the grace and mercy of God, which always accompany them, they make such prophecies in which the lights of acceptance and honour shine like the sun and which consist of the good news of honour and Divine help, and not that of misfortune and adversity.

Consider the prophecies of the Holy Qur'ān and you will find that they are not like the predictions of the astrologers or others but are full of majesty and glory. All those prophecies are characterised by declaring the honour of the recipients and the disgrace of their enemies, their glory and the humiliation of their enemies, their success and the failure of their enemies, their victory and the defeat of their enemies, and their prosperity and the ruin of their enemies. Can any astrologer or soothsayer or mesmerizer put forth such prophecies? Certainly not. Always to proclaim one's own good, and the decline of the opponent and to refute whatever the opponent says and to promise the fulfilment of that which is in one's favour, can only be from God and cannot be the doing of man.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 232-242, footnote 11]

Man's Knowledge of the Universe is Defective

Though man has been trying strenuously for thousands of years to discover God's powers through natural sciences and mathematics, yet his knowledge is so defective that he can only be described as hopeless and unsuccessful in his search. Hundreds of hidden mysteries are disclosed to those to whom visions and revelation are vouchsafed and they are borne witness to by thousands of the righteous; but the philosophers continue to deny them. The philosophers base all thinking and reflection on the brain, but those who have experience of visions have discovered through their spiritual experiences that the fountainhead of reason and understanding is the heart. For thirty five years, I have observed that revelation which is the source of spiritual understanding and of the knowledge of the unseen descends upon the heart. Very often a voice strikes the heart with force, as a bucket is thrown with

force into a well full of water, and that water of the heart surges up like a closed blossom and arriving near the brain blooms like a flower and gives birth to words which are words of the Divine. These spiritual experiences establish that the brain is not concerned with knowledge and true understanding. It is true that if the brain is healthy and suffers from no defect it is benefited by the secret knowledge possessed by the heart, and as the brain is the centre of the nervous system it is like a machine which can pump up water from the well. The heart is the well which is the fountainhead of hidden knowledge. This is a secret that has been discovered by men of truth through true visions and I myself have experience of it.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 282-283]

I have been honoured with Divine converse for nearly eleven years and I know well that revelation descends from heaven. If one were to illustrate revelation by reference to some worldly object one could perhaps compare it with the telegraph which itself discloses every change that occurs in it. **My experience is that at the time of descent of revelation, which is vouchsafed to me as the revelation of the *Auliya'*, I feel that I am under the control of an external force that is very effective. Sometimes this control is so strong and envelops me so forcefully in its light that I find myself drawn to it compulsively and no faculty of mine can stand up to it. In this condition, I hear clear and bright words. I sometimes see angels and observe the power and awe of truth. The words that are conveyed to me often comprehend matters that are unseen and there is such extraordinary control and seizure which is proof of the existence of God Almighty. To deny this would amount to murdering a self-evident truth.**

[Barakāt-ud-Du'ā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, p. 26]

I call God to witness that it is the truth that revelation falls upon the heart from heaven as rays of the sun fall upon a wall. It is my daily experience that when the word of God is about to descend on me then in the first stage I feel a sort of helplessness and experience a change and, though my senses are in a manner working, I find that a powerful force has taken my whole being in its grip and I feel that all the arteries of my being are in the control of that force and all that is mine is no longer mine but belongs to it. When I am in that condition first of all God Almighty presents those of my thoughts to me on which He intends to cast a ray of His words. Those thoughts come before me one after the other in a strange guise, and it so happens that when a thought passes through my mind—for instance, whether a certain person will recover from his illness or not—then suddenly a Divine phrase falls like a ray and often with its falling the whole of my body is shaken. Then this is succeeded by another thought and as soon as it appears a piece of revelation falls upon it like an archer shooting an arrow on every quarry that appears before him. Just at that time, it is felt that this chain of thoughts is generated by our natural capacity and that the words that fall upon it descend from above.

Although poets and thinkers, etc., also receive suggestions on reflection, there is no relationship between revelation and such suggestion, for that suggestion is a consequence of thinking and reflection and is received within the limits of humanness in the full possession of one's senses. But revelation is received when the recipient comes under the full control of God Almighty with all his being, and his own senses and reflection do not intervene in any way. It appears as if one's tongue is not

one's own and is being used by some other strong power. This should make clear the distinction between natural capacity and that which descends from heaven.

[Barakāt-ud-Du'ā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 22-23, footnote]

How Revelation is Received

The slight slumber that overtakes one at the time when the word of God descends upon the heart is completely outside material causes and all physical causes are suspended at the time. When a righteous person, who has true relationship of love and fidelity with God Almighty, submits a supplication to God in the upsurge of that relationship, he is suddenly overtaken by a slight slumber while he is still occupied with his supplication and he seems to wake up and finds the answer to his supplication, couched in eloquent words, being conveyed to him behind the veil of that slumber. Those words possess a majesty and a quality of delight, and Divine power is felt shining through them. They penetrate the heart like an iron nail and often contain knowledge of the hidden matters. It often happens that when that righteous person seeks to submit something more with regard to his first supplication, or submits a fresh supplication, he is again overtaken by a slumber which disappears within less than a second and from it emerge holy words, as the kernel emerges from the shell, which are delicious and full of majesty. In this manner God, Who is Gracious and Merciful and full of kindness, responds to every question and does not manifest any contempt or disgust. If a supplication is made sixty or seventy or a hundred times a response is received in the same manner. That is to say, that at the time of each supplication a slight slumber overtakes the recipient of revelation. On occasion, this

faintness or slumber is heavy as if the person had fallen into a swoon. Such revelation is vouchsafed on very important matters and is the highest type of revelation.

The slumber that overtakes a recipient of revelation at the time of his supplication and prayer behind the veil of which Divine revelation is received, is above any physical causes. Whatever the physicists regard as the law of nature concerning dreams breaks down in this instance. There are hundreds of spiritual matters which refute the thinking of philosophers. Very often a person sees in a vision objects that are thousands of miles away and appear as if they were close to the eye, and often a person can meet and converse in complete wakefulness with the souls of those who have passed away.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 111-112]

Various Forms of Revelation

First Form: Out of several forms of revelation which God has disclosed to me, one is that when God Almighty desires to disclose some hidden matter to His servant He causes to flow from his tongue some phrases in a slight slumber, sometimes gently and sometimes harshly. Those phrases that flow harshly from the tongue fall upon the tongue as hardly as hail falls suddenly upon a hard piece of ground, or as the hooves of a fast running steed strike the earth. Such a revelation arrives with speed and is so awe-inspiring that the whole body is affected thereby and the tongue runs with it so fast and in such a majestic voice as if it is not one's own tongue. The slight slumber disappears altogether when the revelation is completed and during the time that it is received one lies motionless like a corpse. Such revelation is received when God Almighty out of His wisdom

decides not to accept a supplication or decides to postpone its acceptance or wishes to convey something which would lie heavy on the recipient. For instance, when a person seeks to acquire something quickly and such acquisition is not in accord with the Divine will or has to be postponed. I have been the recipient of such revelations on occasion, which it would take too long to describe in detail, but I will set down one instance.

About three years ago, I prayed that people might be disposed to help in the publication of this book whereupon I received this type of revelation in hard words:

‘Not yet.’

When I received this revelation I informed a number of Hindūs and Muslims of it, who are still alive and they also witnessed thereafter the lack of attention of people to this book.

As regards the other type of revelation, in which phrases flow from the tongue with gentleness, it would be enough to state that when some time had passed after the revelation just mentioned, and I was beset with difficulties, then one day I received a revelation from the Gracious Lord:

هَٰذَا إِلَيْكَ بِجَذْعِ النَّخْلَةِ تُسَاقِطُ عَلَيْكَ رُطَبًا جَنِينًا¹³

From this I understood that this was an indication that I should invite people's help and that there was a promise that through such effort I would be able to collect enough money to defray the expenses of the publication of that part of the book. I informed several Hindūs and Muslims

¹³ ‘Take hold of the branch of the palm-tree and shake it; it will shed fresh ripe dates upon thee. [Publisher]

of this revelation also and I also informed Ḥāfiẓ Hidāyat ‘Alī Khān, Extra Assistant Commissioner, who had arrived in Qādiān the same day or the following day. I also informed Maulavī Muḥammad Ḥusain of Batāla. In short, after the receipt of this revelation, according to the Divine command, I made some effort towards inviting assistance and thereafter I received from Lahore, Peshāwar, Rāwalpindī, Malīrkotla and a few other places enough assistance to meet the expenses of the publication of that part. *All praise is due to Allāh for this.*

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmādiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 1, pp. 248-251 sub-footnote 1]

The second form of revelation, which on account of its many wonders I call perfect revelation, is that when God Almighty desires to inform a servant of a hidden matter after his supplication or on His own, He imposes a faintness upon him, whereby he becomes completely free from his self and sinks in that faintness like a person who dives in deep water and disappears in it; then when he emerges from this diving he feels a sort of echo inside himself, and when that echo ceases he feels from inside himself words that are appropriate and fine and delicious. This diving in the faintness is a wonderful experience, which cannot be adequately described in words. In this condition, a whole ocean of understanding is opened for a person. When repeatedly he has this experience of diving that is imposed upon him by God Almighty and he receives a response to every supplication in fine and delicious words, and in each instance God discloses to him verities which it is beyond human power to disclose, he thereby achieves the fullness of understanding and cognition. Man’s supplication and God’s response to it through the manifestation of His Godhead is an experience as if the supplicant beholds God in this very world

and immediately both worlds appear equal to him. When at the time of need a servant makes repeated supplication to his Lord and receives a response, as one human being receives from another, and that response is couched in fine eloquent words, sometimes in a language of which he is completely ignorant, and comprises hidden matters which are beyond the power of creatures, and sometimes conveys the good news of great bounties or of high ranks or of nearness to God, and sometimes comprehends prophecies with regard to worldly blessings, then by the hearing of these fine and eloquent phrases which are far above human power, he acquires a degree of understanding which is appreciated only by him upon whom this bounty is bestowed. In truth, such a one recognizes God as one recognizes a firm and old friend. Such revelation often relates to grand affairs. It sometimes contains words the meanings of which have to be sought for in a dictionary. Sometimes I have received such a revelation in an alien language like English or some other with which I am totally unacquainted.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 260-264 sub-footnote 1]

The third form of revelation is communicated to one's heart in a gentle manner. A phrase passes through the heart which does not comprehend all the wonders in perfection that are a characteristic of the revelation that we have just described. It is not necessarily preceded by any faintness or slumber. It can be received in complete wakefulness. It is felt as if someone has breathed those words into the heart or has thrown them at the heart. One might be partially awake or might be completely awake and one suddenly feels that new words have entered one's breast. Sometimes, immediately on entering the heart, the words manifest their forceful light and one

becomes aware that these words are being conveyed by God. The revelation conveys comfort, satisfaction and contentment to the heart as the air that one breathes conveys comfort to the heart and limbs. A disturbed mind feels its joy and coolness. This is a mystery of which the common people are unaware but men of understanding who have been bestowed experience of Divine mysteries by the Bountiful Lord understand it well. I have experienced such revelation on many occasions.

The **fourth form** of revelation is that some matter is disclosed by God Almighty in a true dream, or an angel assuming human shape discloses a hidden matter, or a writing appears on a piece of paper or on a stone, etc., which discloses hidden mysteries, or other similar experiences.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 273-274 sub-footnote I]

The **fifth form** of revelation is that which has nothing to do with man's heart. One hears a voice from outside as if someone were speaking from behind a curtain, but the voice is very delicious and cheerful and is conveyed with some speed and the heart derives pleasure from it. One's mind is deep in thought and suddenly this voice is heard and one is surprised where it has proceeded from and who is addressing one. One looks for someone from whom the voice could have proceeded and then one realizes that it has come from an angel. It generally conveys some good news when one is anxious and sorrowful or is gripped by fear on hearing some bad news which turns out to have been false. Unlike the second form, such revelation is not the consequence of repeated supplications. An angel speaks suddenly when God Almighty so desires, contrary to the second type of

revelation when a response is received from God Almighty to repeated supplications; a hundred supplications receive a hundred replies from the Absolute Benefactor as has been my own experience.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 287-288 sub-footnote I]

I have several times seen Jesus (peace be on him) in a vision and have also met some of the Prophets in complete wakefulness. I have also seen and conversed many times with our lord and master Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) in complete wakefulness, which was entirely free from slumber or absent-mindedness. I have also met other deceased people at their graves or on other occasions and have talked to them in complete wakefulness. I therefore know well that such a meeting with deceased people in complete wakefulness, and talking to them and shaking hands with them, is quite possible. There is no difference whatsoever between this wakefulness and normal wakefulness. One feels that one is in this world with the same ears and eyes and tongue and yet one feels as if one were in another world. People of the world are not aware of such wakefulness for they are heedless and this wakefulness is bestowed from heaven. It is bestowed upon those who are granted new senses. This is true and is a fact.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Mein, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 36-37]

The Ability to Receive Revelation

Capacity and ability are needed for the receipt of revelation. Not everyone can become God's Prophet and be the recipient of Divine revelation. Allāh the Exalted has given an indication of this in the Holy Qur'ān, as follows:

وَرَادَّاجَاءَهُمْ آيَةٌ قَالُوا كُنْ نُوْنٌ حَتَّى نُوْنُ فِي مِثْلِ مَا أُوتِيَ
 دُئِلَ اللَّهُ أَنْتَهُ أَغْلَرُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسْلَتَهُ¹⁴

(Part Number 8)

This means that when a sign is shown in order to demonstrate the truth of the Holy Qur'ān, they say: We will never believe until we ourselves receive the Divine Book. God knows best where and when to confer Prophethood, that is, He knows who is able and who is not able to receive revelation. He bestows the grace of revelation only upon him who possesses the requisite ability and capacity.

The Wise Creator has created men of different types for various reasons and the whole body of mankind resembles a line one end of which is situated at a great height and the other end is very low. At the high end are the pure souls whose capacities are perfect and at the low end are those who are close to animals and in the middle are those of various degrees. This diversity of capacities is confirmed by observation for no reasonable person can deny that human beings are at different stages of understanding, of righteousness, of fear of God and of Divine love. As one is born handsome and another is born plain, one is born with good sight and another is born blind or with weak sight, one is born normal and another is born defective, in the same way the diversity of intellectual and spiritual faculties is also patent and visible. It is true that every individual, provided he is not insane, can make progress in his reason, his righteousness and his love of the Divine, but it should be borne in mind that no one can grow beyond the limit of his capacity.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 181-182 footnote 11]

¹⁴ Al-An'ām, 6:125 [Publisher]

Man Possesses a Diversity of Intelligence

Human nature is like minerals of diverse types; some are **bright and clear like silver**, some are evil-smelling and inflammable like sulphur, some are restless like mercury and some are hard like iron. This diversity is obvious and is in accord with the Divine dispensation. It is not opposed to the law of nature and contributes towards social peace and adjustment. It is obvious that if all natures had been at the same level of capacity, different types of work which call for different grades of capacities and which are essential for the adjustment of social conditions would have been left incomplete and in suspense. For hard work hard natures are appropriate, and for delicate work those natures are suited which are delicate. The Greek philosophers have expressed the view that, as some men are close to animals, reason demands that the nature of some should be fine and clear so that as we observe that some natures descend so low as to approximate to animals, equally some should be capable of rising so high that they should establish a relationship with the higher world.

Now that it is established that individual human beings possess diversity of intelligence, moral qualities and the light of the heart, that is proof that Divine revelation is confined to certain individuals **who are perfect** in every respect. Every reasonable person comprehends that each soul receives Divine light according to its capacity and its ability and no more. The **sun** is a good illustration of this principle. Its rays are shed in every direction but not all places receive its light equally. A room the doors of which are closed receives no light, and that which has a small ventilator in the direction of the sun receives some light, but not enough to dispel the darkness completely.

But a room of which all doors are open and whose walls are built of clear and **transparent glass** will not only receive the full light of the sun but will also spread it in all directions and convey it to others. The same is the case with the pure souls of the Prophets. The holy souls that God Almighty chooses for His Messengership are like a crystal palace which has no opaqueness and no screen to obstruct the light. It is, therefore, clear that those individuals who do not possess perfection cannot achieve the rank of Divine Messengers. This rank is bestowed upon those whose holy souls are entirely free of darkening veils and of physical coverings and whose transcendent holiness is beyond imagination. **Such perfect souls** are the means of guidance for mankind. As the bounty of life is conveyed to all the limbs by the heart, the All-Wise has appointed the bounty of guidance through such souls for they are bestowed the perfect relationship that ought to subsist between the Source of grace and the recipient of grace. It is not possible that God Almighty, Who is absolutely Unique and Transcendent, should bestow the grace of His holy revelation upon people the greater part of whose nature is dark and opaque, and is narrow and constricted, and whose mean natures are involved in low impurities. If we do not deceive ourselves we would have to confess that to establish a perfect relationship with the Eternal Source and to enjoy converse with His Great Holiness, a special ability and brightness is needed which is appropriate to this great rank and dignity. Not every person can attain to it who is in a state of loss and lacks merit and is covered up in dark coverings and possesses a low nature and lacks high courage.

No one should be deceived by the fact that according to

the **Christians**, holiness and transcendence and innocence and perfect love for the Divine are not essential for **the Prophets who are the recipients of Divine revelation**. They have lost the true principles and have sacrificed all verities to the notion that somehow Jesus might be deified and the atonement might be accepted. As the innocence and holiness of the Prophets demolishes this structure of theirs, they have been compelled to have recourse to one falsehood in order to support another falsehood. Having lost one eye they have had to gouge out the other. They loved falsehood and abandoned the truth. They insulted the Prophets and represented the pure ones as impure and they proclaimed as opaque and impure **the hearts on which Divine revelation descended** so that the greatness of their fictitious god should not be diminished and the doctrine of atonement should not be doubted. In this selfish attitude they forgot that their doctrine not only defames the Prophets but also puts in doubt the holiness of God, for how can He be holy who **established relationship and held converse with the impure**.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 188-190 footnote 11]

A Recipient of Grace Must have a Close Relationship with the Almighty

The philosophy of the descent of the light of revelation is that it descends upon light and does not descend upon darkness, for grace demands a relationship and there is no relationship between darkness and light. Light has relationship with light and the All-Wise operates only in circumstances of appropriateness. In bestowing the grace of light the law is that greater light is bestowed upon one who possesses some light and nothing is bestowed upon one who has nothing. He who possesses the light of eyes

perceives the light of the sun, but he who has not the light of eyes is deprived of the light of the sun also. He who has a small share of natural light receives a little other light and he who has much natural light receives more other light.

The Prophets are those high personages who, despite the vast diversity in human nature, are so blessed with inner light that they become light personified. That is why the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has been named light and a light-giving sun, as is said:

قَدْ جَاءَكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ نُورٌ وَكِتَابٌ مُبِينٌ¹⁵

(Part Number 6)

وَأَعْيَاظُكُم بِاللَّهِ يَاجُزِينِ¹⁶

(Part Number 22)

This is the reason that the light of revelation, for which the perfection and grandeur of natural light is a condition, was bestowed only upon the Prophets and has been confined to them. This refutes those people who, though they admit the diversity of ranks, nevertheless imagine out of their ignorance that the light that is bestowed upon those who possess perfect natures can also be bestowed upon defective individuals. They should reflect honestly and should realize their mistake. They see clearly that God's law of nature does not support their false notion and yet out of bigotry and enmity they adhere to their false notion. In the same way, the Christians do not consider it a condition for the grace of light to descend

¹⁵ 'There has come to you indeed from Allāh a Light and a clear Book.'—Al-Mā'idah, 5:16 [Publisher]

¹⁶ '...and as a Summoner unto Allāh by His command, and as a Lamp that gives bright light.'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:47 [Publisher]

upon anyone that he should possess a natural light, and they allege that it is not necessary that a heart upon which the light of revelation descends should possess inner light. According to them, if a person instead of possessing sane reason is utterly stupid and ignorant, and instead of being brave is an utter coward, and instead of being generous is a total miser, and instead of possessing a sense of honour is utterly shameless, and instead of loving God is in deep love with the world, and instead of being pious and trustworthy is a thief and a robber, and instead of being modest and innocent is a debauch, and instead of being contented is utterly greedy, even such a one can be a Prophet and elect of God. Indeed, with the single exception of Jesus, all the other Prophets whom they accept as true and whose Books they describe as holy were, according to them, full of such defects and were bereft of holy perfection which is a condition of innocence and purity of heart. What a philosophy have the Christians adopted with regard to the descent of the light of Divine revelation! But such a philosophy is approved and followed only by people who are caught in deep darkness and inner blindness. Otherwise, even a feeble-minded person would not deny the obvious truth that to receive the grace of light it is necessary that the recipient should possess inner light.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 195-197 footnote 11]

It is a pity that most people regard as God's word everything that flows from their tongues in a state of slumber, and thus contravene the verse:

لَا تَقْفُ مَا كَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ¹⁷

¹⁷ '... Follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge.'—Bani Isrā'il, 17:37 [Publisher]

It should be borne in mind that anything that flows from the tongue, even if it is not opposed to the Word of God and the word of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), is not the word of God unless the action of God Almighty bears witness to it. Satan, who is man's enemy and who seeks diverse ways of ruining a person, also adopts the method that he puts his words into the heart of a man and assures him that they are words of God and such a person is destroyed in the end.

Three Hallmarks of Divine Revelation

If someone claims to receive revelation, to call it divine would amount to committing spiritual death, unless and until it fulfills three conditions:

First, it should not be opposed to the Holy Qur'ān; but this alone is not enough. Unless the third condition which will be mentioned below is present, nothing can be established.

Secondly, those words should descend upon a person whose soul has been completely purified. He should be one of those who have withdrawn entirely from their passions and who have submitted to a death through which they have approached close to God and have withdrawn far away from Satan. A person hears him to whom he is close. He who is close to Satan hears Satan's voice and he who is close to God hears God's voice. One's utmost effort should be for the **purification of one's soul**. All search ends with that. In other words, it is a death that burns up all inner impurities. When a person completes his search then a stage arrives when he passes under the control of the Divine. Thus through **understanding** and love **God revives His servant** who, by discarding his passions, has arrived at the stage of death. Then

through His extraordinary signs God **reveals to him spiritual wonders** and fills his heart with the attraction of personal love which the world cannot understand. In this condition, it can be said of him that he has been bestowed new life after which there is no death.

This new life is won through complete understanding and complete love. Complete understanding is acquired through God's eternal signs. When a person arrives at this stage, he enjoys true converse with God. This condition is also not enough without the third condition, for perfect purity is a hidden matter and any idle talker could claim to have achieved it.

The third condition of a true recipient of revelation is that God's action should testify to the words that he attributes to God, that is to say, so many signs should appear in its support that sane reason should reject the suggestion that despite so many signs it is not the word of God. This condition is above all other conditions....

It is such a **perfect condition** that no one can reject it. This is the condition through which true Prophets of God have always overcome false people. When a person claims that God's word descends on him and hundreds of signs appear along with it, and a thousand types of support and Divine help are displayed and God attacks his enemies openly, then who can call such a person false?.... Those who enjoy the honour of converse with God and are appointed to call men to Divine guidance are supported by Divine signs which fall like rain and the world cannot oppose them. Divine action bears repeated witness that the words that they put forward are Divine words. If those who claim to be recipients of revelation were to keep this condition in mind, they would escape falling

into error.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 534-538]

Satanic Revelation is a Reality

Satanic revelation is a reality which is experienced by some imperfect seekers. There is also self-suggestion, which may be described as confused dreams. He who denies this opposes the Holy Qur'ān which affirms that satanic revelation is a fact. God Almighty says that so long as a person's purification of soul is not complete and perfected he can be the recipient of satanic revelation and can fall within the purview of the verse:

عَلَىٰ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ¹⁸

But the pure ones are immediately warned of a satanic approach. It is a pity that some Christian ministers have gone so far in their writings as to suggest that when Satan took Jesus to a hillock, this was not an external event which could have been witnessed by others and by the Jews and that three times Jesus received satanic revelation which he did not accept. We tremble at hearing this biblical commentary that Jesus should have been subject to satanic revelation.... No satanic thought can take possession of a pure heart. If such a stray thought should ever come across their mind, it is quickly rejected and their heart is not stained thereby. In the Holy Qur'ān such a stray thought is named *tā'if*. It has very little relation with the heart and is like the shadow of a far away tree. It is possible that Satan the accursed desired to create in the heart of Jesus some slight doubt of this type and he

¹⁸ '(They descend) on every great liar and sinner.'—Al-Shu'arā', 26:223 [Publisher]

rejected it immediately through his prophetic power.... We can affirm that through his prophetic power, and through the light of truth that he possessed, Jesus did not permit the satanic revelation to approach him and immediately occupied himself with its rejection, and as darkness cannot withstand light, Satan was not able to withstand him and ran away. This is the true meaning of:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ¹⁹

Satan has authority only on those who accept satanic suggestions and satanic revelation. But those who shoot the arrow of light at Satan and wound him from afar and refute him and do not follow him in whatever he might say, are exempt from his authority. But as God Almighty desires to show them the kingdom of the heaven and earth and Satan is a part of the kingdom of earth, it is necessary that in order to complete their observation of the creation they should see the face of this curious creature and should hear his word. The garment of their transcendence and innocence is not stained thereby in the least. Satan had, mischievously, according to his ancient way, made a request to Jesus which his pure nature immediately rejected and did not accept. This was not at all derogatory of Jesus. Do not the wicked sometimes speak in the presence of kings? In the same way, Satan spiritually injected his word into the heart of Jesus, but Jesus did not accept it and rejected it immediately. This was a commendable act and to criticize it would amount to foolishness and ignorance of the spiritual philosophy. It is not for every pious person and Sūfī to reject a satanic suggestion and to demonstrate its impurity as did

¹⁹ 'Surely thou shalt have no power over My servants.'—Al-Ĥijr, 15:43 [Publisher]

Jesus with the whip of his light. Sayyed ‘Abd-ul-Qādir Jīlānī (May Allāh be pleased with him) has stated that on one occasion he received a satanic revelation. Satan said to him: "‘Abd-ul-Qādir, thy worship has been accepted and now all that is forbidden to others is permitted to thee and thou art relieved of the obligation of performing *Ṣalāt*." ‘Abd-ul-Qādir said to him: "Avaunt Satan; how can that be permitted to me which was not permitted to the Holy Prophet, peace be on him?" Then Satan disappeared with his golden throne. If a man of God and unique individual like ‘Abd-ul-Qādir received satanic revelation, how can the common people, who have not yet completed their search, escape it? They have not the eyes of light wherewith they can recognize satanic revelation, as did Sayyed ‘Abd-ul-Qādir and Jesus (peace be on him). Those soothsayers who abounded in Arabia before the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) received plenty of satanic revelation, and sometimes on the basis of it they made prophecies and the wonder is that some of their prophecies were fulfilled. Islāmic literature is full of these stories. He who denies the possibility of satanic revelation rejects the teachings of the Prophets (peace be on them), and denies the whole system of Prophethood. The Bible has recorded that on one occasion four hundred prophets received a satanic revelation which was the work of a white *jinn* and on the basis of that revelation they prophesied the victory of a king, but that king was killed in great humiliation in battle and suffered a great defeat. A Prophet who had received his revelation from Gabriel had prophesied that the king would be killed and dogs would eat his body and he would suffer a great defeat. This was fulfilled and the falsehood of the

prophecy of four hundred prophets was demonstrated.

Naturally a question arises that if satanic revelation is so common then all revelation becomes doubtful, especially as an exalted Prophet like Jesus also had such experience. Revelation thus becomes a great trial. The answer is that there is no reason to be disheartened. It is part of Divine law that everything valuable has attached to it some things that are false. Genuine pearls come out of the ocean, but there are also false pearls which people manufacture themselves. Commerce in genuine pearls cannot be stopped because false pearls are also available. A jeweller upon whom God Almighty bestows insight recognizes at once which pearl is real and which is false. The Imām of the age is the jeweller of the jewels of revelation. He who keeps company with him can easily distinguish between the real and the false. O ye Şūfis! And O ye victims of alchemy! step warily in here and remember that true revelation which comes from God Almighty possesses the following characteristics:

Characteristics Of True Revelation

1. It is received at a time when the heart of the recipient, being melted through its ache for truth, flows towards God Almighty like clear water. This is indicated in the *Ḥadīth* that the Holy Qur’ān was revealed in sorrow and should be studied with a sorrowful heart.
2. True revelation is accompanied by delight and conveys certainty in an unknown manner and penetrates into the heart like an iron nail. Its words are eloquent and free from error.
3. True revelation possesses a certain majesty and strikes the heart with power and descends upon it with force and an awesome voice. False revelation is conveyed in

a low voice like the voice of thieves and eunuchs and women inasmuch as Satan is a thief and a eunuch and a woman.

4. True revelation is charged with the power of God Almighty and contains prophecies which are fulfilled.
5. True revelation fosters the recipient's goodness and purifies him of inner impurities and improves his moral condition.
6. True revelation is borne witness to by all the inner powers of the recipient and it sheds a new and pure light on all his faculties and he perceives a change in himself. His previous life comes to an end and a new life begins for him and he becomes a source of sympathy for mankind.
7. True revelation does not finish with only one phrase for God's voice has a continuation. He is very Gentle and He talks to him towards whom He is inclined and answers his questions. A recipient of true revelation can receive a response to his supplications at one place and time; though sometimes an interval occurs between two series of revelations.
8. The recipient of true revelation is never a coward and is not afraid to stand up to false claimants of revelation. He knows that God is with him and would humiliate a false claimant.
9. True revelation is the means of acquiring knowledge and understanding for God does not desire to leave its recipient ignorant and without knowledge.
10. True revelation is accompanied by many other blessings. A recipient of true revelation is bestowed honour from the unseen and is given prestige.

[*Darūrat-ul-Imām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, pp. 483-490]

I was young and now I am old, but from the beginning I

have been a witness of the fact that God Who has ever been hidden manifests Himself through Islām. If a person truly follows the Holy Qur'ān and occupies himself with self-improvement according to its teaching, and lives not like the worldly but like a servant of the faith, and devotes himself to the cause of God and loves His Prophet Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and is free from self-exhibition and arrogance and pride and seeks not his own glory but the glory and greatness of God, and humbles himself to the dust in His cause, the result is that Divine converse starts with him in eloquent Arabic. Divine words are delicious and majestic. They are not the product of one's own mind; such a product is delivered in a low voice like that of a eunuch or a sick person. But God's word is full of majesty and is mostly in Arabic and very often in the form of verses of the Qur'ān. My experience is that first it strikes the heart forcefully and an echo is thereby produced which then blossoms like a flower, and therefrom issues a holy and delicious series of phrases comprising hidden matters and possessing a majesty and a power and effectiveness whereby it penetrates into the heart like an iron nail and is fragrant with the perfume of God. These characteristics are attached to it because some ill-natured persons also receive satanic revelation or are deceived by the product of their own minds. God Almighty causes shining light to accompany His word so as to distinguish it from other types.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 314-315]

Differences between Satanic and Divine Revelation

Most ignorant people consider satanic suggestion as the word of God and are unable to distinguish between

satanic and Divine revelation. It should be remembered that the first condition for Divine revelation is that its recipient should become wholly God's and that Satan should have no part in him. Wherever there is carrion, there also dogs collect. That is why God Almighty says:

هَلْ أَتَيْتُكُمْ عَلَىٰ مَن تَنَزَّلُ الشَّيَاطِينُ ۖ تَنَزَّلُ عَلَىٰ أَفَّاكٍ أَثِيمٍ²⁰

But Satan cannot attack one in whom he has no part and who has departed from the low life as if he had died and has become a righteous and faithful servant of God and has turned wholly to Him, as God Almighty has said:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَنٌ²¹

Those who belong to Satan and follow satanic ways, Satan runs towards them for they are his prey.

It should be remembered that God's words possess a blessing and a majesty and a delight. As God is All-Hearing and All-Knowing and Compassionate, He replies to the supplications of His righteous and faithful servants. This supplication and response can extend over several hours. When a servant humbly submits his supplication, he is within a few minutes overcome by a faintness and he receives the response in the veil of this faintness. Then if he submits another supplication, he again experiences the same condition and finds His response. God is so Generous and Compassionate and All-Knowing that if a servant supplicates to Him a thousand times, each time he receives a response, but as

²⁰ 'Shall I inform you on whom the evil ones descend? They descend on every great liar and sinner.'—Al-Shu'arā', 26:222-223 [Publisher]

²¹ 'Surely thou shalt not have power over My servants.'—Al-Hijr, 15:43 [Publisher]

God Almighty is Self-Sufficient and has regard for wisdom and appropriateness some supplications are not responded to.

Again, Satan is dumb and is not eloquent and so articulate in his speech. Like the dumb, he has no power over an eloquent and prolific speech. He injects a sentence or two into the heart in a smelly way. Since eternity, he has not been given the power to express himself in delicious and majestic words. Nor can he carry on a series of questions and answers for a number of hours. He is also deaf and is not able to respond to every question. He is also helpless and cannot exhibit any power or disclose any hidden matter of high import. Also his throat is hoarse and he cannot speak in a loud and majestic voice. His voice is low like that of eunuchs. You can recognize satanic revelation by these signs. But God is not like a dumb or deaf or helpless person. He hears and responds. His word is conveyed in a majestic, and loud and awe-striking voice. His words are effective and delicious while Satan's words are delivered in a low, effeminate and doubtful manner; there is no majesty, grandeur, or loftiness in them. Nor can he continue for long as he tires quickly and his words are weak and betray cowardice. God's word does not get tired and comprises every kind of power and hidden matters of great import and majestic promises and gives off the fragrance of Divine Glory and Greatness and Power and Holiness. Satan's words do not possess these qualities. Divine revelation possesses an effectiveness; it penetrates into the heart like an iron nail. It creates a holy effect upon the heart and draws the heart to itself and converts its recipient into a person of high courage so much so that if he is cut into pieces with a sharp sword, or is strung up on the gallows, or is afflicted

with every possible kind of torment, and is disgraced and defamed, or is put into the fire and is consumed, he would never deny that the word that descends upon him is God's word. God bestows full certainty upon him and makes him the lover of His own countenance. He values life, honour and property no more than a straw. He never lets go of the garment of God even if the whole world treads him under its feet and he is matchless in his trust, bravery and steadfastness. Those who receive satanic revelation have no such power. They are cowardly because Satan is a coward.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 142-144]

If it is asked that as there is no complete security against satanic intervention then how can we trust our dreams that they are from God? Is it not possible that we should deem a dream to be from God and it might be from Satan, or we might deem it to be from Satan and it might be from God? The answer is that a dream which is from God declares itself by its majesty, blessing, greatness and light. That which proceeds from a holy fountain possesses purity and fragrance and that which proceeds from unclean and dirty water immediately announces its origin through its evil smell. True dreams, which come from God Almighty, are like a holy message which is not accompanied by confused thoughts and possesses an effective power, and the heart is drawn towards it and the soul testifies that it is from God inasmuch as its greatness and majesty penetrate into the heart like an iron nail. Very often it happens that a person sees a true dream and God Almighty shows the same dream, or one like it, as confirmation to some companion of his and thus one dream supports another.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 354]

Some short-sighted people raise the objection that revelation suffers from the defect that it prevents and obstructs its recipient from arriving at complete understanding, which is indispensable for eternal life and everlasting happiness. They explain their objection by asserting that revelation obstructs thinking and cuts short research, inasmuch as those who follow revelation respond to every question by asserting that the matter is either permissible or forbidden in their revealed book, and they do not use their reasoning powers as if they had not been bestowed on them by God and in the end by lack of use those powers decline and almost disappear. Thus human nature is completely changed and begins to resemble animals, and the excellence of the human soul, which means progress in reason, is destroyed and man is deprived of obtaining perfect understanding. In this way, revealed books constitute an obstruction in the way of achieving eternal life and everlasting happiness of which man stands in need.

The answer to the foregoing objection is that it is the lack of intelligence, obtuseness and persistence in error of the Brahmūs that prompts them to think that by acting upon the revealed Book of God the reasoning faculty is rendered useless as if revelation and reason were contradictory of each other and cannot subsist together. This suspicion on their part is compounded partly of falsehood, partly of bigotry and partly of ignorance. The falsehood is that despite their knowledge that Divine verities have been fostered only through people who have followed revelation and that Divine Unity has been propagated in the world only through the elect who believe in the word of God, they make a statement contrary to this known fact. Their bigotry is declared by

the fact that in order to support their assertion they have held back the verity that in Divine matters unaided reason cannot carry a person to the stage of perfect certainty. Their ignorance is betrayed by their regarding revelation and reason as inconsistent with each other, which cannot subsist together, and their thinking that revelation is opposed to reason and is destructive of it, whereas this fear is entirely unfounded.

It is obvious that a follower of true revelation does not abstain from reasonable research and is indeed helped by revelation in his effort to view the realities of things in a reasonable manner. By the help of revelation and by the blessing of its light he does not encounter any confusion in assessing arguments based on reason. He is not reduced to the necessity of inventing invalid arguments, but is able to perceive the way of true reason and is able to arrive at the truth. There is no conflict between reason and revelation and they are not inconsistent with and opposed to each other. Reason lends support to revelation and revelation helps to safeguard reason against going astray. True revelation, that is to say the Holy Qur'ān, does not obstruct the progress of reason. It illumines reason and is its great helper and supporter. As the full value of the sun is appreciated by the eye and the benefits of the bright day are disclosed to those who possess sight, in the same way divine revelation is fully appreciated only by those who possess reason, as God Almighty has said Himself:

وَبَلَدِكَ الْوَمُتَالِ تُضْرِبُهُمُ الْوَيْلَاسُ ۖ وَمَا يَخْفَىٰ لَهَا إِلَّا مَا يَخْلُفُونَ²²

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²² Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:44 [Publisher]

These are illustrations that we set forth for people, but only those who possess knowledge comprehend them.

As the benefits of the light of the eye are disclosed only by the sun, in the absence of which sight and sightlessness would be equal, in the same way, the excellencies of the insight of reason are disclosed by the help of revelation. It secures reason against thousands of useless efforts and points out the nearest way to proper reflection by following which the purpose in view is quickly achieved. Every wise person realizes that if in thinking over a problem help becomes available through which knowledge is gained of the right way of resolving the problem, such knowledge is of great assistance to reason which is delivered from much confused thinking and useless effort. The followers of revelation not only appreciate reason but revelation itself urges them to perfect their reason and thus they are doubly drawn towards progress in reason. First is the natural eagerness which a person experiences to discover through reason the reality and truth of everything and, secondly, the urge of revelation which intensifies their eagerness. Those who study the Holy Qur'ān even cursorily will not deny the obvious fact that this Holy Word lays great emphasis on reflection and observation; so much so, that it describes it as a characteristic of believers that they constantly reflect upon the wonders of heaven and earth and deliberate on the law of Divine wisdom as is said in one place in the Holy Qur'ān:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي
الْأَلْبَابِ ۝ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ

وَيَتَذَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا²³

That is to say, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and in the alternation of the night and the day, there are a number of Signs to prove the existence of the Creator of the Universe and His might, for people of understanding. Wise people are only those who remember Allāh standing, sitting and lying on their sides and keep meditating and pondering over the creation of the heavens and the earth, which impels them to supplicate: Lord Thou hast not created all this without purpose; indeed, everything in Thy creation is full of the manifestations of Thy Power and Wisdom, which points to Thy Blessed Being.

Other revealed books, which have been perverted, urge adherence to unreasonable and impossible matters. As, for instance, does the Bible; but this is not the fault of revelation. It is the fault of defective reasoning. Had those who believe in them possessed sane reason, they would not have followed these perverted books and they would not have permitted such thinking about the unchangeable Perfect and Eternal God that He took on the condition of an helpless embryo and was nourished on impure sustenance and took on an impure body and was born through an impure passage and came into the mortal world, and after enduring all sorts of torments gave up the ghost in extreme misery calling out '*Eli Eli*'. It is revelation which has stamped out this error. Holy is Allāh! How exalted and what an ocean of mercy is the Word which pulled the worshippers of creatures back to the Unity of God. How dear and attractive is that light

²³ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:191-192 [Publisher]

which brought a whole world out of darkness. Outside of it thousands who were called wise and philosophers remained involved in this error and numberless similar errors, and till the Holy Qur'ān came no philosopher refuted forcefully this false doctrine, nor reformed these ruined people. The philosophers themselves were caught in many unholy doctrines. As the Rev. Mr. Yut has recorded, the Christians adopted the doctrine of the Trinity following Plato and built a false structure on the false foundation furnished by this foolish Greek.

In short, true and perfect Divine revelation is not the enemy of reason, but defective reason is the enemy of the semi-wise. It is obvious, for instance, that an antidote is not in itself harmful for the human body, but if a short-sighted person mistakes poison for an antidote, it is the fault of his reason and not of the antidote. To think that it is dangerous to have recourse to a revealed book for the investigation of every matter is crass folly. As we have written, revelation is a mirror reflecting the truth for the benefit of reason and the great argument in support of its truth is that it is wholly free from matters the impossibility of which is established after pondering on God's Power and Perfection and Holiness. Indeed, in matters Divine, which are deep and hidden, it is the only guide for weak human reason. To have recourse to it does not render reason useless, but leads it to deep secrets which it was difficult for reason to penetrate into on its own. Reason derives great benefit from true revelation, that is to say, from the Holy Qur'ān, and suffers no harm or loss therefrom. Through revelation reason is safeguarded against dangers and does not fall into them. Every wise person admits and it is obvious in itself that error is possible in research, which is based on reason alone, but

there is no possibility of error in the Word of the Knower of the unseen.

Be fair and just, is it good or bad for that which is sometimes confronted with the possibility of severe stumbling, that it should be furnished with a companion which should safeguard it against stumbling and support it at the time of its slipping. Would such a companion be of help to lead it to its purpose or would it be a hindrance? It is an indication of inner blindness to regard a helper as an opponent and obstructor and to consider that which completes and perfects as harmful. When you will reflect truly it will become clear to you that God has not harmed reason by appointing revelation as its companion. On the contrary, finding reason perplexed, He has furnished it with a sure instrument for recognizing the truth through the use of which reason is saved from straying into hundreds of erratic ways and is not led astray. Indeed, it discovers the proper way to its true purpose. It is like the case of a person who directs the search for a lost one to the spot where the latter is hidden. No sane person objects to the help of such a one who supplies the needed particulars and points out the easiest way of reaching the lost one on the ground that the helper has meddled needlessly in the search. On the contrary, everyone concerned is deeply grateful to him that he informed them of their ignorance and pointed out the particular spot and opened the door of certainty while they were involved in conjecture. In the same way, those on whom God has bestowed sane reason are grateful to and praise true revelation and realize fully that revelation does not obstruct the progress of their thinking, but saves their thinking from confusion. It indicates one right path out of a variety of involved and doubtful ways treading

along which creates every kind of facility for reason and delivers a person from a host of difficulties which confront him on account of the shortness of age, insufficient knowledge and lack of insight.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 292-309, footnote 11]

The Function of Reason

It is true that reason is also a lamp which God has furnished to man, the light of which draws man towards truth and saves him from a variety of doubts and suspicions and sets aside different types of baseless ideas and improper conjectures. It is very useful, very necessary and is a great bounty. Yet, despite all this it suffers from the shortcoming that it alone cannot lead to full certainty in the matter of the understanding of the reality of things. The stage of perfect certainty is that man should believe that the reality of things exists as it in fact does exist. Reason alone cannot lead to this high degree of certainty. At the outside, it proves the need of the existence of something, but does not prove that in fact it exists. This degree of certainty that a person's knowledge should proceed from the stage of 'should be' to the stage of 'is', is acquired only when reason is joined by a companion which, confirming its conjecture, converts it into fact, that is to say, regarding a matter concerning which reason says it 'should be' that companion informs that in fact it 'is'. Reason only establishes the need of a thing; it cannot establish its existence, and these are two distinct and separate matters. Thus, reason needs a companion which should supplement the defective 'should be' of reason with the affirmative 'is' and which should give information of facts as they truly exist. So, God Who is most Compassionate and Generous and desires to lead

man to the stage of utmost certainty has fulfilled this need and has appointed several companions for reason and has thereby opened the way of perfect certainty to it, so that the soul of man, whose total good fortune and salvation depends upon perfect certainty, should not be deprived of its desired good fortune and so that it should quickly cross the delicate and dangerous bridge of 'should be' which reason has constructed over the river of doubts and suspicions, and should enter the grand palace of 'is' which is the house of peace and satisfaction.

Those companions of reason, which are its helpers, which come into operation on different occasions, are not more than three. If the operation of reason relates to that which can be felt or observed—for instance, which can be seen or heard or smelt or touched—its companion, which can lead it to certainty, is true observation which is called experience. If the operation of reason relates to those occurrences which take place at different times and places, the companion of reason in such a case is history, or newspapers, or letters, or communications. These also, like experience, so clear up the smoky light of reason that to doubt it thereafter is folly or insanity. If the operation of reason relates to matters which are metaphysical, which cannot be seen by the eye, or heard by the ear, or touched by the hand, nor can they be inquired about through history, then the companion that helps reason is revelation.

The law of nature also demands that, as relating to the first two matters imperfect reason is furnished by two companions, a companion should also be furnished to it in respect of the third category of matters. There can be no discrimination in the law of nature. When God has not

desired to leave man in a defective condition with regard to worldly knowledge and arts, an error in respect of which is not of any great consequence, it would be an ill thought that He desired to leave man in a defective condition regarding the full understanding of matters, complete certainty concerning which is a condition of salvation and any doubt concerning which would push man into eternal ruin. In such a case man's knowledge concerning the hereafter would be reduced to pure conjecture. He would not have available any means which should bear witness to that which is and should bestow contentment and satisfaction upon the heart that in fact and in truth that which reason conjectures as existing does indeed exist. The need that reason establishes is not fictitious, but is real. When it is known that in matters Divine perfect certainty can be obtained only through revelation, and that man is in need of perfect certainty for his salvation and that without perfect certainty faith cannot be safeguarded, then it becomes obvious that man is in need of revelation.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 78-80, footnote 4]

The ideas of reason do not suffer only from the defect that they lack certainty and cannot comprehend the finer points of matters Divine, but they also suffer from the defect that discourses based upon reason alone are largely ineffective in persuading the heart. The reason is that for any discourse to affect the heart it is necessary that its truth should be so well established in the mind of the hearer that no room should be left for doubt and the heart should believe that what it is being told is not subject to the possibility of error. We have just shown that reason alone cannot lead to perfect certainty. It is thus obvious that the effect that is produced on the heart

by perfect certainty cannot be expected from reason alone and this is confirmed by daily experience. For instance, when a person returns home from having sojourned in a distant country then everyone inquires from him about that country and they are all deeply affected by what he relates out of his personal knowledge provided he is not suspected of telling lies; rather he is a respected and truthful person. Why are his words so effective? They are effective because he is known to be a righteous person and it is believed that whatever he relates of the circumstances of that country he has observed with his own eyes. Therefore, his discourse affects the hearts and his statements appeal to the hearers as if they had seen those events that he describes with their own eyes. Sometimes it happens that when he relates a pitiable tale it so affects the hearers that their eyes are filled with tears as if they had witnessed the event themselves.

But if a person who has not moved beyond the four walls of his house and has never been abroad, nor has heard anyone describe the circumstances and conditions of another country, were to begin to discourse upon the circumstances and conditions of another country out of his imagination, it would produce no effect upon the hearers. In fact, they would charge him with madness and insanity in that he relates that which is beyond his observation and experience and is above his imperfect knowledge. It is like the story of a foolish person who was praising wheaten bread and when he was asked whether he had ever eaten it, he replied that he had not eaten it but that his grandfather used to say that on one occasion he had seen someone eating it.

Unless someone in the estimation of his hearers compre-

hends any event fully, his discourse would produce no effect upon their hearts and he would make himself a laughing stock. That is the reason why the discourses of worldly-wise people have never attracted the attention of anyone to the hereafter. Their hearers continue to think that, as the speaker was talking from conjecture, they could oppose him with their own conjectures, as neither side had witnessed the reality. This is the reason that when some wise people expressed themselves in support of the existence of God, other wise people opposed them and wrote books in support of atheism. The truth is that the thinking of even those who express themselves to some degree in support of the existence of God was not altogether free from atheistic ideas, nor is it free now. Consider the Brahmūs. Do they ever regard God as possessing perfect attributes? Do they believe that He possesses the attribute of speech as a living being should? Do they regard Him as Controller and Sustainer? Do they believe that God is Ever-Living and All Sustaining and that He can speak to righteous hearts? On the contrary, they consider Him as fictitious and like the dead who has been invented by human reason through its own imagination. No voice is ever heard from him. In fact, he is not God, but an idol lying in a corner. I wonder how these people are pleased with such childish ideas and what fruit do they expect from their fictitious thinking? Why do they not search like true seekers for the God Who is Powerful and Ever-Living and is capable of affirming His own existence and can revive the dead in an instant by the call: *I am Allāh*? When they know that the light of reason is smoky then why do they not seek Perfect Light? They admit that they are ill, but they do not seek a remedy. It is a pity that they do not open their

eyes so that they might see the truth. Why is not the covering lifted from their ears so that they can hear the Divine voice? Why are their hearts so twisted and why is their understanding so warped that the objection to which they have laid themselves open they advance against the followers of true revelation?

The Brahmū Samājists entertain another illusion that revelation is a restriction and that they are free from every restriction and thus they are better off as a free person is better than a prisoner. We admit this criticism and confess that revelation is a restriction without which true freedom cannot be achieved. True freedom is that a person should be delivered from every type of error, doubt and suspicion and should arrive at the stage of perfect certainty and should behold his Lord in this very world. This true freedom is achieved in this world by perfect and God-loving Muslims through the Holy Qur'ān and is not available to anyone besides them whether Brahmūs or others....

Another objection of the Brahmū Samājists is that to follow revelation is contrary to the law of nature for the clear and straight way of finding out the reality of anything is to approach it on the basis of reason. For instance, the true reason for theft being a vile act which satisfies the soul is that it is a wrong and trespass, which reason condemns as improper and not permissible. The real reason is not that any revealed book condemns it as a sin. Again arsenic should not be swallowed because it is a fatal poison and not because its eating is forbidden in Divine revelation. Thus, they argue that it is reason that indicates the true reality and not revelation. They are unconscious of the fact that their argument is refuted when it is proved by strong and cogent arguments that

reason is imperfect and unreliable. What a pity! Is it proper to continue to harp with such cheek on the same dead thought which has already been demolished by an array of powerful arguments?... It is true that the reality of things is disclosed to some degree by arguments based on reason, but reason does not complete all stages of certainty. The instance cited by them refutes their proposition. The fatal quality of arsenic is not established by reason acting by itself, but this quality was determined as a certainty when reason through proper experimentation discovered the hidden quality of arsenic. This is what we desire to make clear, namely that to determine as a certainty the lethal quality of arsenic reason had to have recourse to a companion, namely proper experimentation. In the same way, in order to determine as a certainty Divine matters and the reality of the life after death, reason needs the help of Divine revelation and without its help reason cannot arrive at firm conclusions in matters of faith, as in other matters. Without the help of an appropriate companion, reason is helpless, imperfect and incomplete. Within its own limits, reason cannot determine anything as a certainty unless it has the help of a companion. Without such help it cannot escape error, especially in matters of Divinity in which the reality is hidden behind veils and no sample of it is available in this world. In these matters, imperfect reason cannot lead one to perfect understanding, let alone escape all possible error....

The difficulties that we encounter in matters relating to that unseen world, and the surprises with which we are met in imagining the conditions of that unseen and hidden world, compel us to confess that in order to discover correctly the circumstances of that world, and to

believe in them with certainty, we are in need of many times more historians and record-makers and experienced people than we need in matters of this world. The historian and record-maker of that world cannot be anyone except the Word of God and the vessel of certainty is likely to founder without the help of that record-maker, and the cold wind continues to consign the arc of dubious faith to the whirlpool of death. In such a case, no wise person would turn away from revelation relying entirely upon the guidance of defective reason. His safety in such case depends upon revelation, the contents of which do not comprise conjecture, but in addition to arguments based on reason, they inform us of the facts of the second world like a true historian and give an eyewitness account of them.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 327-335 footnote 11]

Consider well that without revelation it is not possible to arrive at complete certainty, or to escape error, or to base oneself on the true Unity of God, or to overcome one's passions. It is revelation through which we are able to affirm that God 'is' and the whole world calls on Him because He 'is'. It is revelation which from the beginning has inspired the hearts with the assurance that God 'is'. It is through revelation that worshippers find delight in worship and the faithful are satisfied with regard to the existence of God and life after death. It is revelation which has enabled millions of the righteous to leave this transient world with great steadfastness and with the eagerness of the love of the Divine. It is revelation the truth of which has been attested by the blood of thousands of martyrs. It is revelation through whose power of attraction kings put on the garment of beggars and many wealthy people preferred poverty to riches, and by its

blessings millions of unlearned old women departed this world with eager faith. It is the one vessel which has so often carried numberless people through the whirlpool of creature-worship and doubt to the safety of the Unity of God and perfect certainty. It is revelation that is the friend of last moments and is the helper in serious conditions.

The harm that has been done to the world by pure reason is not a hidden matter. What made Plato and his followers deny that God is the Creator? What made Galen doubt the immortality of souls and the reality of Judgment? What made philosophers deny that God has knowledge of all particulars? What made great philosophers worship idols? What led to the sacrifice of roosters and other animals before idols? Was it not reason unaccompanied by revelation?

It is not correct to state that many people became pagans even when following revelation and fashioned for themselves new gods. This was not the fault of true revelation, but was the fault of those who mixed falsehood with truth and preferred the worship of their passions to the worship of God. Yet, Divine revelation did not neglect their reform and did not forget them. Fresh revelation reformed the matters which had led them astray.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 163-164 footnote 11]

Of course it is true that reason is not without its use and its benefit, nor have we so alleged, but we cannot escape the obvious verity that through reason and conjecture alone we cannot arrive at that perfect certainty which can be achieved through the combination of reason and revelation, nor can we escape mistakes and errors and

self-approval and self-righteousness. Our self-conceived ideas cannot overcome our passions like the forceful and majestic and prestigious commandments of God. Our self-conceived concepts, idle thoughts and baseless superstitions cannot furnish us with that joy, delight, satisfaction and contentment which are conveyed to us by the delicious words of the True Beloved. Then shall we, by relying on reason alone, subject ourselves to all the losses and disadvantages and misfortunes, and subject ourselves to thousands of calamities? No wise person can accept that He Who has created in us the thirst for perfect understanding has refused to furnish us with the full cup of such understanding, and that He Who has drawn the hearts to Himself has shut upon us the door of true understanding and has confined all stages of the recognition of God to the contemplation of our fictitious need. Has God created man so unfortunate that he is to be wholly disappointed in obtaining in this world the full satisfaction that his soul desires and his heart longs for in the matter of the recognition of God, and eagerness fills his soul and heart? Is there no one soul out of thousands of you which can realize that the doors of understanding which can be opened only by God cannot be opened by human power and that human imagination cannot equal the assurance of God: I am present? God's affirmation of His Own Being in a manner manifests God to us, but man's conjecture has no such effect. As our conjectures based on reason alone cannot equal God's word that confirms His Existence, then why is not His word needed for the perfection of certainty? Are your hearts not awakened by observing this clear disparity? Is there nothing in that which we have set forth which can affect your hearts?

There is no difficulty in understanding that human reason cannot be the instrument for ascertaining that which is hidden. Which of you can deny that whatever we are to encounter after death is all hidden? For instance, reflect whether anyone knows how the soul departs at the time of death and where it goes and with whom and where is it detained and through what experiences it passes. How can human reason pronounce conclusively on these matters? A conclusive pronouncement would be possible if a person had died once or twice and had become familiar with the paths along which he reached God, and he had a recollection of the places where he had dwelt for some time. But as it is, we have only conjecture to fall back upon. No one has seen these things and to be satisfied with baseless conjecture is not true satisfaction. If you were to assess the matter with the eye of research, you would testify that human reason and conscience cannot discover these matters as a certainty and that no page of the book of nature points to them with sureness.

Leaving aside other matters, reason is perplexed at the very first stage and is unable to determine what the soul is, how it enters the body and how it departs. No one has observed anything entering or departing. If you were to enclose an animate at the time of its death inside a glass chamber you would not observe anything departing from it, and if in the glass chamber any germs were produced it cannot be determined how they obtained entry into the chamber. The hatching of an egg furnishes an even greater wonder. How does the soul fly in, and in case of the young dying inside, by what way does the soul escape? Can any wise person resolve this puzzle through the use of his reason alone? There can be various conjectures but through reason alone nothing certain can be

established. That being the case at the very first step then what can this defective reason discover about the other matters of the life after death?

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 336-338, footnote 11]

The Law of Nature Demands Revelation

The All-Wise did not desire to leave weak man to his own imagination and conjecture, but has supplied him with every type of preacher and lecturer who could satisfy him and could set at rest his spiritual restlessness and has provided him with the words which could heal him of his illness. God's law of nature establishes this need of revelation. Is it not true that millions of people, when they are caught in misery or sin or neglect, are affected by the words of a preacher or an adviser and their own knowledge and their own thinking do not prove adequate? The degree of satisfaction to be drawn from such sources depends upon the respect and the honour that the person concerned feels for the one who talks to him. It is only the promise of a person who is truthful in his promises and has the power to perform them that brings satisfaction and content to the hearer. In such circumstances who can doubt the obvious proposition that, concerning matters of life after death and matters of metaphysics, the best means of satisfaction and of the removal of spiritual pain is the Word of God. When a person believes fully in the Word of God, it delivers him from many whirlpools and contends against severe passions and bestows steadfastness in frightful accidents. When a wise person at the time of any difficulty, or in the grip of passion, finds God's promise or warning in the Word of God, or someone else explains to him what God has commanded, he is so deeply affected that he

forthwith repents. Man is often in need of being comforted by God. Very often he is overtaken by such misfortunes that had not the Word of God provided him with glad tidings he would have been so discouraged as perhaps to deny the existence of God, or in his disappointment would have broken off from God altogether, or would have died of sorrow:

وَلَقَدْ عَلِمُوا لَمَحَظَ بَشِيٍّ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصِ رِزْقِ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَ
 الثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۚ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ
 وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ ۚ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ وَ
 رَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ۚ²⁴

In the same way, for overcoming one's passions God's word is needed as at every step man encounters matters which can be remedied only by the word of God. When a person desires to turn to God he encounters many obstructions. Sometimes he recalls the delights of the world, or he is attracted by the company of his cronies or he is awed by the difficulties of the way. Sometimes habits and customs block his way and sometimes considerations of honour, fame or power try to obstruct him. Sometimes all these combine together like an army and pull him in their direction and tempt him with their immediate benefits. Their combination develops such force that his own ideas are not able to withstand it. In such a contest, the effective armament of God's word is

²⁴ 'And We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives and fruits; but give glad tidings to the patient; Who, when a misfortune overtakes them, say: Surely, to Allāh we belong and to Him shall we return.

It is these on whom are blessings from their Lord and mercy and it is these who are rightly guided.'—Al-Baqarah 2:156-158 [Publisher]

needed so that the opposing forces may be vanquished at the first assault. Can anything happen one-sidedly? How then is it possible that God should keep silent like a stone and His servant should make progress on his own in his loyalty, sincerity and steadfastness, and that he should be pulled forward in the field of love and strengthened by the idea that there must be a Creator of heaven and earth? Conjecture can never take the place of fact. For instance, suppose that a poor debtor has been promised by a truthful, wealthy person that at the due time he would pay off all his debts, and there is another poor debtor who has been given no promise by anyone but gives rein to his imagination that perhaps he too would be helped by someone to pay off his debts at due time. Can both these persons be equally satisfied? Certainly not. All this is comprehended in the law of nature and no verity lies outside of it. Alas! Those who claim to follow the law of nature break it themselves and run over to the other side and act contrary to what they had affirmed.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 340-342 footnote 11]

I do not know who has misled you to imagine that there is some contradiction between reason and revelation on account of which they cannot subsist together. May God bestow sight upon you and remove the veils from your heart. Can you not appreciate this simple thing that when through revelation reason arrives at its perfection, and is warned of its errors, discovers the true direction of its path, is delivered from confusion, is relieved of useless effort and travail, converts its doubtful knowledge into a certainty, and advancing from conjecture is informed of true facts and is comforted and finds satisfaction, then is revelation its benefactor and helper and supporter, or is it its enemy and opponent and causes it harm? What

bigotry and blindness is it to imagine that a supporter who serves as a clear guide is a highwayman and obstructer and that one who pulls out of a pit is he who pushes into the pit. The whole world knows and all those who have eyes can see and those who can reflect and observe find that there were millions of such in the past, and are also present today, who put their faith in the excellence and greatness of reason and were known as wise and guided by reason and yet they denied the existence of God and died in that condition. On the other hand, show us but one person who believed in revelation and yet denied God. As revelation is indispensable for firm faith in God then it is obvious that where this condition is lacking there can be no firm faith. It is clear that those who deny the possibility of revelation deliberately prefer the way of faithlessness and support the spread of atheism. They do not reflect that if the faculty of hearing is also to be deprived of hearing His word then how can one believe in the existence of a Being Who is hidden and cannot be seen or smelt or touched? Even if by observing the creation an idea of the existence of the Creator comes to mind, when a seeker after truth despite his lifelong effort never beholds the Creator nor hears His voice, nor finds any sign of a Living Being, then will he not imagine that perhaps he was wrong in imagining the existence of a Creator, and perhaps the atheists and the physicists are in the right who regard some elements in the universe as the creators of others and do not admit the need of any other creator? I know well that if a follower of reason will pursue his thinking his mind will be assailed by this doubt, for it is not possible for him to escape such doubts when he fails in his search for some personal sign of God. It is in the nature of man that if he

considers something necessary and indispensable through his conjecture, but fails to discover its existence despite every search and inquiry, he begins to doubt the correctness of his conjecture and in the end denies it and hundreds of doubts opposed to his conjecture assail his mind. We often indulge in conjecture with regard to a hidden matter that it will be thus and thus, but when the fact is known it turns out to be something quite different. These daily experiences teach one the lesson that it is the height of foolishness to be satisfied with pure conjecture. Till conjecture is supported by fact all exhibition of reason is a mirage and no more, the end of which is atheism. If you desire to be an atheist, you can do as you please; otherwise, you can be delivered from the fierce flood of doubts, which has swept thousands of wiser people than yourself by one stroke into the depths, by taking a firm hold of the strong handle of revelation. It will never happen that pursuing only your ideas based on reason you will advance to a point where you behold God sitting somewhere. With your perverse thinking, you will end up finding God signless and devoid of the signs of the living, and, after being frustrated in your quest for Him, you will join hands with your atheist brethren.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 344-346, footnote 11]

OBJECTION. Complete understanding can only be obtained through something which can be observed at all times and in all ages. This characteristic is found in the book of nature, which is always open and is never closed, and it should therefore be taken as one's guide, for something which is closed most of the time and opens only on certain occasions cannot be a guide.

ANSWER. To regard the book of nature as open in comparison with Divine revelation is a sign of blindness.

Those who possess healthy insight know well that only that book can be described as open the writing of which can be deciphered clearly and in the reading of which no doubt is left. Who can prove that any one's doubt was removed by merely looking at the book of nature? Who knows whether anyone has been led to the goal by the book of nature? Who can claim that he has completely understood all the arguments of the book of nature? Had it been an open book why should those who rely on it have been involved in thousands of errors? Reading this one book why should they have differed so much among themselves that some might have admitted to some degree the existence of God and others might have repudiated it altogether? Even if it were to be assumed, for the sake of argument, that one who after reading this book does not deem it necessary that God should exist, would be granted a long enough life to discover his mistake, at one time or the other, the question still remains that if this book is open why did its reading lead to such errors? Do you consider a book an open, if its readers differ with regard to the existence of God and go astray at the very first step? Is it not true that having read this book of nature thousands of philosophers became atheists or remained idol worshippers and only he from among them followed the straight path who believed in Divine revelation? Is it not true that those who confined themselves to the reading of this book and were considered great philosophers continued to deny God's control of the universe and His knowledge of particulars and died in that condition of denial? Have you not enough intelligence to know that if a letter is construed in one way by X and in another way by Y and in an altogether different way by Z, the text of the letter cannot be

regarded as plain and open, but is considered doubtful and confused? This is not a matter the understanding of which needs great intelligence, but is an obvious verity. However, what can we say of those who persist in describing darkness as light, and light as darkness, and day as night, and night as day?

Even a child can understand that to expound one's meaning the proper way appointed by God Almighty is through clear speech. The only instrument for expressing the thoughts of the mind is the faculty of speech. It is only through the use of this instrument that one person can be informed of that which is in the mind of another person. Every matter that is not expounded through this instrument falls short of being completely understood. There are thousands of matters concerning which it becomes impossible for us to arrive at a true understanding merely on the basis of natural arguments, and our reflection upon them is subject to error. For instance, God has made the eye for seeing and the ear for hearing and the tongue for speaking. That much we can understand by reflecting on the nature of these limbs, but if we rely only on these natural indications and pay no attention to the explanations of Divine revelation, then our natural inclination would be that without discriminating between proper and improper occasions for their use we should look at whatever we wish and hear whatever we desire and should express whatever passes through our minds. The law of nature indicates only that the eye is for seeing, the ear for hearing and the tongue has been created for speech, and we are misled into thinking that in the use of the faculties of sight and hearing and speech we are completely free and uncontrolled.

Now, if the Divine word were not to define the law of

nature and were not to clear up its confusion by its open statements, there would be great risk of one's incurring numberless dangers by merely following the law of nature. It is the Word of God alone which by its clear statements lays down the limits of our speech, action, motion and abstention and teaches us good manners and furnishes us with pure light. It is the Word of God which, for the guarding of our sight and hearing and speech, has laid down:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَنْبَاصِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا أَرْوَاحَهُمْ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ أَزْكَىٰ لَهُمْ²⁵

(Part Number 18)

This means that the believers should guard their eyes and ears and private parts and should avoid every undesirable activity of sight, hearing and private parts. Thus would they be able to foster inner purity. That is to say, their minds will be safeguarded against passions for these are the limbs which incite passions and involve the animal faculties in trial.

Observe, therefore, how the Holy Qur'ān has emphasised control over eyes and ears and private parts and forbidden indulgence in any impurity. In the same way the tongue has been directed to adhere to the truth, as is said:

قُولُوا قَوْلًا سَدِيدًا²⁶

(Part Number 22)

That is to say, one is to utter only that which is true and proper and should be free from everything vain and false. To direct all faculties along the straight path, a comprehensive warning has been issued which is enough to pull

²⁵ Al-Nūr, 24:31 [Publisher]

²⁶ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:71 [Publisher]

up the heedless and that is:

إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا²⁷

(Part Number 15)

That is to say, the ears, the eyes, the heart, and all limbs and faculties possessed by man will be called to account for their improper use. Thus have all limbs and faculties been directed towards good and proper use expressly and emphatically in the Word of God and every limb is, in clear language which admits of no doubt or confusion, directed to adhere to the straight path. Can these explanations and details be ascertained by reading any page of the book of nature? Certainly not. Then which is the open book? This one or that one? Which of them has prescribed the limits and the proper use of natural faculties? Had gestures alone been sufficient why should man have been invested with a tongue? He has bestowed the tongue upon you. Has He not Himself the power of speech? Is it proper to say of Him Who created the whole universe without the aid of any matter and without the need of builders and labourers and carpenters, but only through His will, that He does not possess the power of speech, or that He has the power but that out of miserliness He has deprived man of the grace of His word?

Is it right that one should think of the All-Powerful as being weaker than the animals? The lowest animal can inform another animal of certainty about its own existence through its voice. A fly can inform other flies of its advent by its humming. According to you, however, the All-Powerful does not possess even the faculty of a fly. As you say clearly that He has never opened His mouth

²⁷ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:37 [Publisher]

and has never possessed the faculty of speech, you want to affirm that He is imperfect and defective, whose other attributes are known, but whose attribute of speech has never been discovered. How can you say with regard to Him that He has bestowed upon you an open book in which He has clearly declared His mind? Indeed your view of Him can be summed up by saying that God Almighty has furnished no guidance and that you have discovered everything by your own ability.

Divine revelation can be described as open in the sense that it casts its influence on the hearts of all. Every type of temperament is benefited by it and every type of seeker derives help from it. That is the reason why many people have been guided through Divine revelation and very few, indeed almost none, through reason alone. Even reason affirms that that should be so. It is obvious that when a person, who becomes known to people as a righteous informer, describes his experience and observation of matters relating to the life after death and calls in aid arguments of reason to expound his meaning, he has a double force at his disposal. First is that it is believed concerning him that he has observed the matter that he speaks of and has seen it with his own eyes; and secondly, he illustrates the truth in the light of clear arguments. The combination of these two types of proof invests his preaching and advice with a strong force which pulls at even the hardest of hearts and influences every type of soul. His exposition comprises different types of illustration which can be understood by every type of person who is not wholly bereft of reason and for the understanding of which no particular standard of ability is needed. He can satisfy every type of person according to the temperament of each and at the level of

his capacity. His speech has great power to pull men's thinking towards God and to make them discard the love of the world and to impress upon their hearts a concept of the hereafter. It is not confined to the narrow and dark concept to which the discourses of the followers of reason are confined. Its effect is widespread and its benefit is complete. Every vessel is filled with it according to its capacity. This is indicated by God Almighty in His Holy Word:

أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَالَتْ أَوْدِيَةٌ بِقَدَرِهَا²⁸

(Part Number 13)

This means that God sends down His Word from heaven and every valley begins to flow with the water of the Divine Word according to its capacity.

That is to say, every one benefits from it according to his temperament and ideas and ability. Exalted natures are benefited by the wise mysteries and those who are even higher find a wonderful light the description of which is beyond words. Those who are lower, observing the greatness and personal perfection of the righteous informer, believe sincerely in what he says and they also arrive at the coast of salvation by boarding the ark of certainty. Only those are left outside who have no business with God and are the insects of the earth.

The Book of Revelation is the Only Open Book

Observing its effectiveness, the way of following revelation is open and wide. It is well known that a speech is charged with blessings, eagerness, power, greatness and attraction according to the degree to which the step of the

²⁸ Al-Ra'd, 13:18 [Publisher]

speaker is planted high in the stages of certainty, sincerity and fidelity. This perfection can be discovered only in the speech of a person who doubly possesses Divine understanding. Every wise person realizes that a forceful speech, to be effective, issues from the mouth of a person when his heart is full of the eagerness of certainty and only those words take possession of the hearts which surge forth from the hearts of those who believe with perfect certainty. This also shows that from the point of view of effectiveness, Divine guidance alone is the opener of doors. In short, from the point of view of the vastness and vigorousness of effect, it is only the book of revelation that is proved to be open. It is obvious that only such a person proves himself the greatest benefactor of God's creatures who combines in himself revelation and reason. He has the ability to benefit every type of temperament and nature. A person who seeks to draw people to the right path through logical arguments only can produce an effect, if at all, only on those who are highly educated and able and can follow his learned discourses. The average person has not the intelligence to follow philosophical discourses. Thus, the grace of his knowledge is confined to the few who can understand his logic and only those can benefit from it who, like him, are familiar with methods of reasoning. This can be proved by a comparison of the achievements of reason and Divine revelation. Those who are aware of the circumstances of past philosophers know very well how they failed to propagate their teachings widely and how their constricted and incomplete exposition failed to affect the hearts of common people. Compare this with the high effectiveness of the Holy Qur'ān. How powerfully it has filled the hearts of its true followers with the

Unity of God and in what a wonderful manner its splendid teachings routed out the habits and customs of hundreds of years standing, which had become like second nature, from the hearts of people. Wiping out their lower passions from their hearts, it gave them the opportunity to drink deep of the Unity of God. This happened in the case of millions. It is the Holy Qur'ān which, by displaying its effectiveness and producing good and lasting results by the evidence of its matchless power, compelled its enemies to confess its peerless excellencies. Even those who were confirmed in their disbelief were so deeply affected that they involuntarily confessed:

إِنَّ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُّبِينٌ²⁹

(Part Number 23)

It is the Holy Qur'ān whose attraction overcame confirmed habits and so pulled the hearts to God that millions of God's creatures set the seal of their blood on the Unity of God. In this manner from the beginning it is revelation that has proved the guide and which has fostered human reason. Otherwise, great philosophers and wise men have found it difficult, even impossible, to discover the details of metaphysics. Those who are not equipped with normal reason, and have not had available to them the means of making efforts in that direction, have remained without any knowledge of these matters. The facilities which God's true and perfect revelation—that is to say, the Holy Qur'ān—has furnished to reason, and the confusion from which it has delivered reflection and observation are facts for which every wise person

²⁹ '... This is nothing but clear magic.'—Al-Saba', 34:44 [Publisher]

must be grateful. Considering that the recognition of God began through revelation, and that the revival of the understanding of the Divine has always taken place through revelation, and that relief from the difficulties of the way can only be procured with the help of revelation, every wise person is compelled to confess that the way which is clear and straight and is always open and has always led to the goal is Divine revelation. To hold that is not an open book is clear folly.

We have explained in detail that the recognition of God by the Brahmū Samājists, which is based upon reason, is limited to 'should be' and that they fall short of the perfect stage of 'is'. This also shows that the clear and open way of the recognition of the Divine is discovered only through the Word of God and cannot be reached by any other means. If a newly born child is deprived of education and left only to the book of nature, which according to the Brahmū Samājists is an open book, he would achieve little understanding and would possess no recognition of God. Experience has shown that if a person is not guided through his sense of hearing by revelation to the existence of God, he is not able to determine whether there is any Creator of this universe and, if he does pay any attention to searching for the Creator, he ends up by deifying some part of creation like water, fire, the moon or the sun as is witnessed among the wild tribes. It is only the grace of revelation through the blessings of which man has recognized the Peerless and Matchless God as befitted His Perfect and Faultless Being. Those who were uninformed of revelation and had no revealed book to turn to, and had available no means of knowing about revelation, achieved no understanding of the Divine, despite the fact that they pos-

sessed eyes and hearts. They gradually forsook humanness and approximated to senseless animals and derived no advantage from the book of nature. It is obvious that if that book had been an open one, the wild tribes would have taken advantage of it and would have achieved equality with those who had recognized God through Divine revelation. Then what greater proof is needed of the fact that the book of nature is a closed one than that whoever relied solely upon it, and never heard of Divine revelation, was altogether deprived of the recognition of God and even remained ignorant of human manners?

If by the book of nature being open is meant that it is physically visible, this is irrelevant to the point under consideration. When it is seen that no one by contemplating the book of nature can derive any spiritual benefit from it and cannot find God unless he is guided by revelation, it matters not that nature is visible all the time.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 207-216 footnote 11]

All historians know well that in past ages whenever anyone acquired full knowledge of God and His perfect attributes, he did so through revelation and that the Unity of God was never propagated through reason. That is why those people who had no acquaintance with revelation remained unaware of the name of God and remained uncultured and uncivilised like animals. Who can present to us a book written in the past about knowledge of the Divine and comprised of real verities, the author of which might have claimed that he did not discover the straight path of the recognition of God through revelation, nor was he informed through his sense of hearing of the existence of the One God, and that in discovering God and learning about Divine attributes he derived help

only from his reason and reflection and diligence and that, without having recourse to any other resource, he discovered the Unity of God and that his mind of itself arrived at the true recognition and understanding of God Almighty? Who can prove to us that there was an age when Divine revelation was unknown and there was no Holy Book and the people of that age believed in the Unity of God and recognized Him merely through contemplation of the book of nature? Who can inform us of the country whose people, being unaware of revelation, were guided to God by their reason alone and believed in the Unity of the Divine by the exercise of their reflection and observation?

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 219-220, footnote 11]

True Unity of God Cannot be Realized Without Divine Revelation

Why the pure Unity of God cannot be learnt without Divine revelation, and why one who denies revelation is not cleansed of paganism? This matter becomes apparent when one reflects upon the reality of Divine Unity. Unity means that one should believe that the Being and attributes of God are free of any association and that we should believe that the tasks which can be accomplished by God's Power cannot be accomplished by the power of anyone else. It is because of letting go of this Unity that fire-worshippers, sun-worshippers and idol-worshippers, etc., are called pagans inasmuch as they supplicate their idols and divinities concerning matters the bestowal of which is in the hands of God alone. It is obvious that those who deny revelation also believe, like the idol worshippers, that creatures are invested with the attributes of the Divine. They believe that the powers of the

All-Powerful are possessed by human beings. They imagine that they discovered God through their reason and that in the beginning it was human beings who thought of appointing a God and that it was by their efforts that God emerged from the state of being unknown and was recognized and was worshipped; that He was unknown before and no one was aware of His existence and it was through wise people that He came to be known. Is this anything different from the belief of the idol worshippers? Indeed not. The only difference is that the idol worshippers appoint other things as their benefactors and these people consider their smoky reason as their guide and benefactor. In one way, these latter go beyond the idol worshippers. Though the idol worshippers believe that God has bestowed great powers on their deities and that on accepting a variety of offerings they bestow upon their worshippers that which they ask for, yet they have never alleged that God was discovered by these deities and that the existence of God was known only through them. It was left to those who deny revelation to claim God as one of their inventions and to announce that God has never affirmed: I am present; and that it was their great achievement that, without being told and informed, they found Him on their own. He was silent like one asleep or dead and they discovered His track by the exercise of their own reflection. Thus in effect they repudiate any obligation to God, but in a way put Him under an obligation to themselves, in that, without having been informed that God exists and without full certainty that disobedience of Him would subject them to such and such torment and obedience to Him would attract such and such bounty, they have submitted to this fictitious god. According to them God

was so weak and infirm that He could not announce His Own existence and could not furnish any reassurance concerning His promises. He was hidden and these people disclosed Him; He was unknown and they made Him known; He was silent and they worked on His behalf. His Godhead has become known only since a short time and that also through their efforts.

Every wise person would appreciate that such an affirmation goes beyond that which the idol worshippers allege. The idol worshippers believe in their deities as their benefactors, but those who deny revelation allege that reason, which is their deity, is the benefactor not only of people but also of God inasmuch as God became known only through the exercise of reason. It is thus clear that by denying revelation they not only believe in God in a doubtful way and are involved in diverse errors, but they are also deprived of belief in the perfect Unity of God and are stained with paganism. What is the association of partners with God? Only to attribute to others the favours and bounties bestowed by God.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 165-167 Footnote 11]

The Type of People who Experience Heavenly Signs

There are three types of people who experience heavenly signs. First, those who possess no merit and have no relationship with God Almighty, but who on account of their intellectual appropriateness see some true dreams and are granted some true visions which contain no indication that they are accepted of God and are loved by Him, nor do they derive any benefit from their dreams and visions. Thousands of the wicked and evil ones share with them such smelly dreams and visions....

Secondly, there are those who have some relationship

with God Almighty, but that relationship is not perfect. Their dreams and revelations resemble the experience of a person who on a dark and very cold night espies the glow of a fire from afar and thereby is able to avoid walking along a path which is full of pits and thorns and rocks and along which serpents and wild beasts abound. But the glow of the fire cannot safeguard him against the cold and death. If he cannot reach the warm circle of the fire, he is destroyed like the one who walks in the dark.

Thirdly, there are people whose experience of dreams and revelations resembles that of a person who on a dark and very cold night not only finds the bright glow of the fire and walks in its light, but entering its warm circle is safeguarded fully against the cold. This stage is reached by those who burn up their passions in the fire of Divine love and adopt a life of bitterness for the sake of God. They perceive death ahead of them and run towards it and choose it for themselves. They accept every torment in the cause of God and for the sake of God they become the enemies of their ego and treading contrary to it, exhibit such power of faith that even the angels are surprised at the strength of their faith. They are spiritual champions and all attacks of Satan come to naught in opposition to their spiritual power....

The perfect revelation, which is of the third type and descends upon perfect individuals, resembles the ray of the sun that falls on a clean mirror which is adjusted towards it.... Then that ray is magnified ten times and its light becomes unbearable for the eye.

When revelation descends in the same way on a purified soul its extraordinary light shines forth and the reflection of Divine attributes is exhibited in that soul and the

countenance of the Divine One is fully disclosed....

The lights of Divine revelation are accepted in their perfect condition by a soul which is perfectly purified. Mere dreams or revelation do not indicate any excellence in the recipient unless, his soul being perfectly purified, he exhibits this reflection and the countenance of the True Beloved is displayed in his soul.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī , Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 22-26]

Three Kinds of Dreams

Dreams are of three kinds—egoistic, satanic and divine. Egoistic dreams are a reflection of one's own thoughts like a cat dreaming of flecks of meat. A satanic dream is wild and frightening. A divine dream is a message from God; their proof is a matter of experience. These are Divine matters which are far distant from this world. If we judge them by reason another person cannot understand them and we cannot make him understand. These are signs of the existence of God Almighty which He casts upon the heart from the unseen. When we find that what we were told has come to pass, we begin to believe in it. An instrument of this world cannot recognize these things. These are spiritual matters and are recognizable only spiritually. A true dream bears witness to its own truth.

[Malfūzāt, vol. IV, pp. 368-369]

Dreams and visions of all are not alike. The perfect vision, which in the Holy Qur'ān is described as the disclosing of the unseen, is like a perfect circle and is not bestowed upon everyone, but only upon the elect. The vision or revelation that comes to a defective person is itself defective and puts him to shame. Disclosing the

unseen is an experience like that of a person who mounts to the top of a high building and observes the surroundings and can easily distinguish everything. A person who desires to see the same things from a low level misses many of them. It is the way of God with His elect that He elevates their sight to a height whence they can observe everything easily and are able to give information of the end. One standing at a low level cannot predict the end. That is how Bal'am was deceived concerning Moses (peace be on him) and he failed to discern his high status which would have induced him to be respectful.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Mahdī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 442-443]

Revelation of Trial and Revelation of Exaltation

It should be borne in mind that revelation is of two kinds, the revelation of trial and the revelation of exaltation. The revelation of trial sometimes brings about the ruin of the recipient as happened with Bal'am, but the recipient of the revelation of exaltation is never ruined. Even the revelation of trial is not bestowed upon everyone. Some human temperaments are deformed as some people are born deaf and dumb and blind. In the same way, the spiritual faculties of some are extinct and they carry along as a blind person carries along with the guidance of others.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 11]

3

Ḥ ADĪTH AND THE SUNNAH OF THE HOLY PROPHET^{SA}

To hold fast to Islamic injunctions, the Muslims have three things.

Sources of Islāmic Guidance

First, the **Holy Qur'ān** which is the Book of God than which we have no more conclusive and certain statement. It is the Word of God and is free from all doubt and speculation.

Secondly, the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), which is called the *Sunnah*. Here we are not speaking in terms of the terminology used by the *Ahl-e-Ḥadīth*. We do not regard *Ḥadīth* and *Sunnah* as one and the same thing, as is done by traditional scholars of *Ḥadīth*. They are distinct, *Ḥadīth* is one thing and *Sunnah* is another. By *Sunnah* we mean the practice of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, to which he adhered and which appeared along with the Holy Qur'ān and will accompany it. In other words, the Holy Qur'ān is the Word of God Almighty and the *Sunnah* is the practice of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). It has ever been the way of God that the Prophets bring the Word of God for the guidance of people and illustrate it in practice with their conduct so that no doubt should remain in the minds of people with regard to the Divine Word. They act upon it and urge others to do the

same.

The third source of guidance is *Ḥadīth*, by which we mean those traditions which were compiled from the statements of diverse narrators a century and a half after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him).

The distinction between *Sunnah* and *Ḥadīth* is that *Sunnah* is a continuous practice which was started by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). It is only next to the Holy Qur'ān in its certainty. As the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was commissioned for the propagation of the Qur'ān, he was also commissioned for establishing the *Sunnah*. As the Holy Qur'ān is certain so is the continuous *Sunnah* which he practised. Both these tasks were performed by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) as his duty. For instance, when the Prayer services were made obligatory, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) illustrated by his action how many *rak'as* were to be performed in each Prayer service. In the same way, he illustrated the performance of the pilgrimage. He thus established thousands of his companions on his practice. The practical illustration which has been continuous among the Muslims is the *Sunnah*. On the other hand, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) did not have the *Ḥadīth* recorded in his presence nor did he make any arrangement for its compilation. Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (May Allāh be pleased with him) had collected some *Aḥādīth* and then had them burnt out of greater caution as he himself had not heard them from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and did not know their reality. When the time of the companions of the Holy

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) had passed some of their successors thought of compiling the *Aḥādīth* and they were compiled. There is no doubt that most of the compilers of *Ḥadīth* were very pious and righteous. They tested the accuracy of *Aḥādīth* as far as it was possible and tried to steer clear of those which, in their opinion, were manufactured. They rejected every *Ḥadīth* any narrator of which was of doubtful veracity. As all this activity was *ex post factum*, it was no more than conjecture. Yet, it would be most unfair to say that all *Aḥādīth* are vain and useless and false. So much care was taken in compiling the *Aḥādīth*, and such research and criticism were employed in the task, that they cannot be matched in any other religion.

The Jews also had compilations of *Ḥadīth* and Jesus was opposed by that sect of the Jews who followed the *Aḥādīth*, but it is not proved that the Jewish compilers of *Ḥadīth* had exercised that care in compiling their collections as the Muslim compilers of *Ḥadīth* did. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to imagine that until the *Aḥādīth* were compiled, the Muslims were unaware of the details of Prayer services or did not know the proper way of performing the pilgrimage. The practical illustrations of the *Sunnah* had taught them all the limits and obligations laid down by Islām. It is true, therefore, that even if the *Aḥādīth*, which were collected after a long time, had not been compiled this would not have affected the real teaching of Islām for the Holy Qur'ān and *Sunnah* had fulfilled this need. The *Aḥādīth* only added to that light and Islām became light upon light and the *Aḥādīth* became testimonies for the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*. Of the many sects that subsequently appeared in Islām, the true one derived great benefit from the true *Aḥādīth*.

The correct way, therefore, is neither to treat the *Aḥādīth* as having greater authority than the Qur'ān, as do the *Ahl-e-Ḥadīth* of this age, and not to prefer the statements in the *Aḥādīth* which are contradictory of the Qur'ān to the Qur'ān itself; nor to regard the *Aḥādīth* as vain and false as is the belief of Maulavī ‘Abdullāh Chakrālwi. The Qur'ān and *Sunnah* should judge the *Aḥādīth* and those that are not opposed to them should by all means be accepted. This is the straight path and blessed are those who follow it. Most unfortunate and foolish is the person who rejects the *Aḥādīth* altogether without regard to the test that we have proposed.

It should be the duty of the **members of our Community** that a *Ḥadīth* which is not opposed to the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*, should be accepted and followed, however weak might be its authority, and it should be preferred to the rules framed by jurists.

[Review bar Mubāḥatha Batālwi wa Chakrālwi,
Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 209-212]

Authoritative Books

The books that we accept and believe in and consider trustworthy are the following.

First is the Holy Qur'ān. It should, however, be remembered that only that interpretation of a verse of the Qur'ān is correct and trustworthy which is testified to by other verses of the Qur'ān, inasmuch as some verses of the Qur'ān interpret other verses. If certainty of meaning should not be guaranteed by other verses of the Qur'ān, then the meaning should be confirmed by some true and reliable *Ḥadīth*. According to us, the interpretation based merely on one's opinion is not permissible. Everyone who raises an objection against the Holy Qur'ān should

keep this rule in mind.

Of the other books that are accepted by us the *Ṣaḥīḥ of Bukhārī* ranks as the first. All its *Aḥādīth* which are not opposed to the Holy Qur'ān are in our view authoritative. Next comes *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. We accept its authority subject to the condition that it should not be opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*. Next to them are the compilations of *Tirmidhī*, *Ibn-e-Mājah*, *Muattāh of Imām Mālik*, *Nassa'ī*, *Abū Dā'ūd* and *Dār Quṭnī*, which we regard as authoritative so long as they are not opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*. These are our religious books and these are the conditions under which we accept them.... Every critic must confine himself to these books and these conditions.

[Āryā Dharam, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 10, pp. 86-87]

Book of Allāh to be Preferred to All

Regarding the Book and *Sunnah* as authorities, I believe that the **Book of Allah is to be preferred above all others**. If the purport of a *Ḥadīth* is not opposed to the Book of Allāh, it would be accepted as authoritative, but we will not accept an interpretation of a *Ḥadīth* which is opposed to the clear text of the Holy Qur'ān. So far as possible, we shall try to interpret a *Ḥadīth* so that it should be in accord with the clear text of the Book of Allāh, but if we come across a *Ḥadīth* which is opposed to the text of the Holy Qur'ān, and it cannot be interpreted in any other way, we would reject it as **spurious**, inasmuch as God, the Glorious, has said:

قِيَامِي حَدِيثٌ بَعْدَ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ وَإِيَّتِهِ يُؤْمَنُونَ³⁰

In what discourse apart from Allāh and His command-

³⁰ Al-Jāthiyah, 45:7 [Publisher]

ments will they believe?

This means that if the Holy Qur'ān is conclusive and positive about a matter and its meaning is clear, a believer should not accept a *Ḥadīth* which is clearly opposed to it. To the same effect is the verse:

فَيَأْتِي حَدِيثٌ بَعْدَهُكَ يُؤْمِنُونَ³¹

According to these verses a **believer must accept the Book of Allāh without condition and should accept a *Ḥadīth* conditionally. This is my stand.**

[Al-Ḥaq, Mubāḥatha Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, pp. 11-12]

A person who is bestowed the understanding of the Qur'ān by Divine grace, and who finds that a *Ḥadīth* is opposed to a verse of the Qur'ān, should, out of respect, so far as it is possible, so interpret the *Ḥadīth* as to bring it into accord with the Holy Qur'ān, but if this is not possible and cannot by any means be achieved, he should regard the *Ḥadīth* as spurious. This is better for us. We should seek an interpretation of a *Ḥadīth* which is not opposed to the Holy Qur'ān, but if this should not be possible it would be heresy and disbelief that we should give up the Qur'ān for the sake of *Aḥādīth*, which have been conveyed to us by human hands and with regard to which it is not only a possibility, but a certainty, that they have got mixed up with human statements.

[Al-Ḥaq, Mubāḥatha Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 21]

Authenticity of *Aḥādīth*

The *Aḥādīth* are divided into two parts. One part is that which is completely **protected by practice**, that is to say

³¹ 'In what thing will they believe thereafter?'—Al-A'rāf, 7:186
[Publisher]

such *Aḥādīth* as are strengthened and are carrying the degree of certainty by the firm and strong and certain method of practice, and **which are comprehensive of all religious needs and worship and covenants and dealings and the commandments of the law.** Such *Aḥādīth* are doubtless certain and are fully proved. The strength of these *Aḥādīth* is not derived from the art of compilation of *Ḥadīth*, nor from their inherent force, nor from the reliability of and confidence in their narrators, but is bestowed by the blessings of practice. I accept these *Aḥādīth* so far as they are supported by practice up to a certain degree of certainty. But the other portions of *Aḥādīth* which are not related to practice and are accepted on the basis of the truthfulness of their narrators are not held by me as being beyond the status of conjecture. At the most they can be employed as useful conjecture inasmuch as the manner in which they have been compiled is not certain and conclusive, but leaves room for perversion.

[Al-Ḥaq, Mubāḥatha Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 35]

An objector hears from someone that the *Aḥādīth* are not reliable and he immediately concludes therefrom that with the exception of the Holy Qur'ān all other authorities in Islām are baseless and doubtful and fall far short of certainty and conclusiveness. This is a great mistake, the first result of which is to destroy faith and religion; for if it were true that with the exception of the Holy Qur'ān all other sources are false, imposture, conjectures and imagination, then little would be left of Islām for all the details of our faith have come down to us through *Aḥādīth*. Our Prayer services have been made obligatory by the Holy Qur'ān, but it is nowhere laid down in the Qur'ān that the Dawn Prayer (*Fajr*) comprises two *rak'as*

of *Fard* and two *rak'as* of *Sunnah*, and the Noon Prayer (*Zuhr*) comprises four *rak'as* of *Fard* and four and then two *rak'as* of *Sunnah*, and the Sunset Prayer (*Maghrib*) comprises three *rak'as* of *Fard* and the Evening Prayer (*Ishā*) comprises four *rak'as* of *Fard*. In the same way, we have to depend upon *Aḥādīth* to discover the details of *Zakāt*. There are thousands of details relating to worship and dealings and covenants which are derived from the same source. Besides, the principal source of Islāmic history is *Aḥādīth*. If *Aḥādīth* are not to be relied upon you cannot take it as certain that **Abū Bakr** and **‘Umar** and **‘Uthmān** and **‘Alī** (May Allāh be pleased with them) were the companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, who became his successors in that order and died in that order. If *Aḥādīth* are not to be relied upon, we cannot be certain about the existence of these great personalities and it might be possible that all these names are fictitious and that there was no Abū Bakr, no ‘Umar, no ‘Uthmān and no ‘Alī.... In the same way, shall we deny that the name of the father of the Holy Prophet^{sa} (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was ‘Abdullāh, and the name of his mother was Āminah, and the name of his grandfather was ‘Abdul-Muṭṭalib, and one of his wives was named **Khadīja** and another **‘Āysha**, and another **Ḥafṣa** (May Allāh be pleased with them) and that the name of his foster-mother was **Ḥalīma**, and that he used to withdraw to **cave Ḥirā** for worship and that some of his companions migrated to Abyssinia, and that for ten years after his advent, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) resided in Mecca and that thereafter there were all those battles that are not even mentioned in the Qur’ān, simply because these facts are established by *Aḥādīth* and the *Aḥādīth* amount to nothing?

Were that so, it would not be possible for the Muslims to relate any portion of the biography of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). It should be observed that the events of the life of our lord and master, what kind of life he led in Mecca before his advent, and in what year he called people to his Prophethood, and in what order people embraced Islām, and how were they persecuted by the disbelievers in the ten Meccan years, and how the wars began, and in which of them the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) took part himself, and to what regions the rule of Islām had extended in his lifetime, and whether he addressed letters to the rulers of the time, inviting them to Islām, and if he did so, what was their response, and after his death what were the victories achieved during the time of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^{RA}, and what difficulties he had to contend with, and what countries were conquered in the time of Ḥaḍrat ‘Umar^{RA}, all these matters are known through *Aḥādīth* and the statements of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). If the *Aḥādīth* amount to nothing, it would not only be difficult but would be impossible to discover the events of those times and in such a case the opponents of Islām would be free to invent whatever they like concerning the events of the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and of the lives of his companions, (May Allāh be pleased with them). We would thus afford to the enemies of Islām a great opportunity of making baseless attacks against Islām and we would have to confess that all the events related in the *Aḥādīth* are baseless and imaginary, so much so, that even the names of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) are not known

for certain. To suppose that we cannot derive any certain and conclusive truth from the *Aḥādīth* would amount to destroying a great portion of Islām with our own hands.

The true and correct position is that we must accept whatever is stated in the *Aḥādīth* unless it should be opposed to the Qur'ān in clear terms. It is admitted that it is natural for man to tell the truth and that recourse is had to falsehood under some compulsion, for falsehood is unnatural. To doubt the conclusiveness and correctness of the *Aḥādīth*, which through practice had become a characteristic of the different groups of Muslims, would amount to insanity. For instance, if anyone were to contend that the number of *rak'as* performed by the Muslims in the five daily services is a doubtful matter, inasmuch as there is no verse in the Qur'ān prescribing two *rak'as* for the dawn prayer (*Fajr*) and two for the Friday prayer (*Jumu'ah*) and two each for the two 'Eid services and that most of the *Aḥādīth* are unreliable, would such a one be in the right? If such an opinion were accepted about the *Aḥādīth*, we would first have to forego the Prayer services, for the Qur'ān has not prescribed anywhere the method of performance of Prayer services and they are performed only on the basis of the accuracy of *Aḥādīth*....

This is a serious mistake which has drawn the followers of nature in this age far away from Islām. They imagine that all Islāmic practices and ceremonial and worship and biographies and history in connection with which reference is made to *Aḥādīth*, are established only on the basis of a few *Aḥādīth*. This is a clear error. The practice which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) had established with his own hands, had become so common among millions of people that even if there had

been no trace of the compilers of *Aḥādīth*, no harm would have been done. Everyone has to admit that the Holy Teacher and Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) had not so confined his teaching as to train only a few people in it and to leave all others unaware of it. Had that been so, Islām would have been so corrupted that it could not have been reformed through the efforts of any compiler of *Ḥadīth*. The Imāms of *Aḥādīth* have compiled thousands of *Aḥādīth* relating to religious instruction, yet there is no *Ḥadīth* which was not being acted upon before its being recorded and which was not known to the world. If there is any teaching, or event, or doctrine the foundation of which has only been laid by the Imāms of *Ḥadīth* on the basis of some report and no sign of it is discoverable in practice, nor is it mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān, then without doubt such a report which became known a century and a half later, would absolutely lack certainty and would deserve whatever condemnation might be directed at it. Such *Aḥādīth* have no great relationship with faith in the history of Islām. If you look with care you will find that the Imāms of *Aḥādīth* have very seldom mentioned *Aḥādīth* no trace of which is found in practice. It is, therefore, not true, as some ignorant ones imagine, that the world has learnt of the hundreds of matters relating to the faith, even fasting and Prayer services, only from the *Aḥādīth* compiled by Bukhārī and Muslim and others. Were the Muslims without faith for a century and a half? Did they not perform the Prayer services? Did they not pay Zakāt? Did they not perform the Pilgrimage? Were they unaware of the Islāmic doctrines that are mentioned in the *Aḥādīth*? Certainly not.

4

ANGELS

Those people are to be pitied who, by being affected by the darkness of false philosophy, **deny the existence of angels and satans** and reject the clear texts and proofs comprised in the Holy Qur'ān, and foolishly fall into the pit of heresy. **This problem is one of those for proof of which, from the verities comprised in the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty has chosen me alone.** *All praise is due to Allāh for this.*

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 89]

God Almighty, Who in His Transcendence and Holiness is above everything, employs appropriate agencies for His signs and manifestations. Bodies and material things confined as they are to their personal characteristics, and conscious of their existence and characterised by their designs and natural actions, and having a permanent existence, which comprises self and excludes non-self, they have drawn far away from the Cause of causes and the Absolute Benevolent. They are shut off by a thick veil of their own existence and ego and their having been created. They are not worthy that those graces of the Almighty should descend upon them directly which can only descend if the veils that have been mentioned did not intervene and their existence wholly resembled non-existence. As their existence does not resemble non-existence, everything of this kind of creation loudly proclaims its existence. The sun proclaims that it is a body that is the source of heat and cold that affects the

world in three hundred and sixty-five forms and creates heat by its rays and causes cold by their diversion and rules over bodies and their matter and their shapes. The earth proclaims that it is a body divided into a thousand countries, that it produces vegetation of diverse types, that it prepares various types of minerals inside it and that it accepts heavenly effects like a woman. The fire proclaims that it is something that burns and possesses the quality of combustion and is a substitute for the sun in the dark. Thus everything in the earth praises itself....

All these things proclaim their praise and are veiled in the screen of their characteristics and have drawn away from the Source of Grace and, without the intervention of such things as are free from these veils, no design of the Fountainhead of Grace can establish a relationship with them inasmuch as the veil steps in between. The Wisdom of God Almighty, therefore, demanded that to be the primary manifestation of His designs, there should be a form of creation which should not be veiled by self, but should possess a form which, contrary to other things, should by its nature be free from intervening self and should serve God Almighty as His limbs, and its numbers should correspond to the designs of God Almighty which are related to the whole of creation. That unusual creation should possess a nature like a transparent mirror and should be ever present before God Almighty. It should have two directions. One direction should be that of uniqueness and transcendence and, being imperceptible and free from veils, it should be different from the other forms of creation and should resemble closely by way of reflection the Being of God Almighty and should not be veiled by self. The other direction should be that of being created, on account of which they should have a

relationship with the rest of creation and should be able to approach them. Thus, through this design of God Almighty, this wonderful form of creation came into being which is called angels. They are so lost in obedience to God that they have no will or fashion or design of their own, and no personal faculties whereby they could be kind to anyone on their own, or could be angry with anyone on their own, or could desire something on their own, or could dislike something on their own. They are wholly like the limbs of the Divine. All the designs of God Almighty are first reflected in their transparent mirrors and through their mediation are spread in the whole of creation. God Almighty, on account of His Perfect Holiness, is in extreme uniqueness and transcendence, therefore, those that are not free from ego and from the opaqueness of veiled existence and are conscious of their existence have no relationship with the Fountainhead of Grace. Thus, the need arose for a form of creation which on the one side should be related to God Almighty and on the other to His creation so that they should obtain grace from one side and communicate it to the other.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 161-170, footnote]

Angels are External Means of the Fulfilment of Our Spiritual Needs

In order to accept the existence of angels, the easiest way is that we should direct our reason to the following. It is admitted that for the training and perfection of our bodies, and in order that the desired actions of our senses should be carried into effect, God Almighty has promulgated the law of nature that the elements and the sun and the moon and all the stars have been pressed into service

that they should help our bodies and faculties to perform all their functions in the best manner possible. We cannot escape from the verity that our eyes cannot perform their function by their own light unless they are aided by the light of the sun, and our ears cannot hear anything by their faculty of hearing unless they are aided by the air. Does this not prove that Divine law has ordained that the perfection of our faculties should be achieved through external means and that our nature cannot dispense with the help of external means? If we will observe carefully we will find that not in one or two matters, but for the perfection of all our senses and faculties and powers, we are dependent upon external help.

As this law and system of God Almighty, Whose works display unity and appropriateness, operates firmly and compulsorily with reference to our external faculties and senses and our material needs, then does it not follow necessarily that there should be some system for our spiritual perfection and spiritual performance so that the identity of the two systems should prove the Unity of the Creator? It is obvious that the All-Wise One Who has instituted this external system and has chosen that through the effect of the external means like the heavenly bodies and elements, etc., our bodies and faculties and senses should be perfected, the same All-Wise and All-Powerful One would have chosen that system for our spiritual perfection, for He is One without associate and there is unity in all His wisdom and works. Thus the external means which affect our spirituality and fulfil our spiritual needs, as the sun and the moon and the elements help us with regard to our physical needs, are known by the name of angels. This proves the existence of angels and, observing the law of nature as a whole, we are

compelled to acknowledge their existence though we may not be able to penetrate to their reality, nor is this necessary. When we have accepted the external law, there is no reason why in the same way we should not accept the internal law. We shall have to accept it in the same way as we have accepted the external law. That is the reason why God Almighty in His Holy Book has set forth these two laws in the same words, as He says:

وَالذَّرِّيَّتْ ذُرَّاءُهَا فَأَلْجَمِلَتْ وَفَرَّاءُهَا فَأَلْجَمِلَتْ بِشَرَّاءُهَا فَأَلْمُقَسِّمَتْ أَمْرًا³²

that is to say, God puts forward the testimony of the winds that separate the vapours from the oceans and other waters and carry them inside like pregnant women and waft them in the shape of clouds to their goal and the testimony of the angels that put into effect all these matters. This indicates that the winds have no power in themselves to lift the vapours from the oceans and to convert them into clouds and to cause them to send down rain where it is needed and thus administer matters. All this is the function of angels.

In these verses God Almighty first indicated, like philosophers, the cause of rain descending from the clouds and set out how water becomes vapour and then becomes clouds, then in the last verse:

فَأَلْمُقَسِّمَتْ أَمْرًا³³

disclosed the reality that no one should imagine that the system of material causes and effects is adequate for the Divine dispensation, but that a system of spiritual causes is behind this physical system which supports this visible

³² Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:2-5 [Publisher]

³³ Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:5 [Publisher]

system. At another place it is said:

وَالْمُرْسَلَاتُ عُرْفًا ۖ قَالَ حُصِفَتْ عَصْفًا ۖ وَالتَّشْرُوتُ نَشْرًا ۖ
فَالْفَرْقَتُ فَرْقًا ۖ قَالَ لُمُؤَيَّدَاتُ دُكْرًا ۖ³⁴

This means that God Almighty puts forth the testimony of the winds and angels which proceed slowly and then proceed fast, and the winds that raise the clouds, and the angels which are appointed over them, and the winds that carry the message to the ears, and the angels who carry the Divine Word to the hearts.

In this way, God Almighty has combined the angels and stars in the verse:

فَالْمَكْرُوتَاتُ أَمْرًا³⁵

The seven planets have been referred to as arranging the affairs of the earth externally and the angels are referred to as arranging them internally. The commentary *Fath-ul-Bayān* sets forth both these views on the authority of Mu‘ādh bin Jabal and Qushairī. Ibn-e-Kathīr has reported on the authority of Ḥasan that all arrangements that are carried out between heaven and earth are carried out through angels, and Ibn-e-Kathīr writes that this is an agreed interpretation.

Ibn-e-Jarīr has interpreted the verse:

فَالْمَكْرُوتَاتُ أَمْرًا³⁶

as meaning that the angels carry out the arrangements of the universe, that is to say, that though on the surface,

³⁴ Al-Mursalāt, 77:2-6 [Publisher]

³⁵ ‘And by those who plan and execute their task well.’—Al-Nāzi‘āt 79:6 [Publisher]

³⁶ Al-Nāzi‘āt, 79:6 [Publisher]

stars and the sun and the moon and the elements carry out their functions, yet in reality it is carried out by angels.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. I33-I37 Footnote]

Independent Existence of Angels

Our observation and our reflection and intelligence and thinking clearly show that for every grace there are **intervening causes** between God Almighty and ourselves, through whose intervention every faculty receives grace according to its need. **This establishes the existence of angels and jinns.** We have only to prove that for the performance of good or ill our faculties alone are not enough and that we are in need of external help and assistance which has supernatural effect. These helpers and assistants do not operate directly without any mediation. There are some mediatory means. The observation of the **law of nature** has established conclusively and certainly that those helpers and assistants exist outside of us. We may not be aware of their true reality, but we know for certain that they are neither the Almighty Himself operating directly, nor are they our own faculties and capacities. They are a species of creation which have independent existence. **When we name any of them as calling to good, we would describe him as the Holy Spirit or Gabriel, and when we name him as calling to evil we will describe him as Satan or Iblīs.** It is not necessary that we should exhibit the Holy Spirit or Satan to every dark heart, though those who have insight can see them and they become visible in visions.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 86-88]

Angels Carry Out Appropriate Duties

May Allāh guide you, the Holy Qur'ān nowhere says that God is changeable, but it does say that man is changeable. Therefore, God carries out changes appropriate to man. When a child is in the womb, it is nourished on blood, and when it is born, for a time it is nourished on milk and thereafter takes other food. God Almighty makes appropriate provision for it from time to time. When a child is in the womb God Almighty commands the angel, i.e., internal particles of the womb, to manufacture blood for it. When it is born that command is cancelled. The angels of the mother's breasts, which are their particles, are commanded to produce milk. When a child finishes its nurture through milk, that command is also cancelled and the angels of the earth, who are its particles, are commanded to produce food and water for it till the end. Hence we believe that such changes are part of Divine Will....

God has taught us in the Holy Qur'ān that this natural system does not run by itself and that all the particles of these things hear the voice of God and are His angels, who are appointed by Him to carry out certain functions and they do so according to His will. The particles of gold manufacture gold, and the particles of silver manufacture silver, and the particles of pearls manufacture pearls, and the particles of the human body prepare the human child in the womb. These particles do not function on their own, but hear God's voice and act in accordance with it. That is why they are called His angels.

Angels are of many types. These are angels of the earth. The angels of heaven exercise their influence from heaven, as the heat of the sun is an angel of God which

ripens the fruits and performs other functions. The winds are God's angels which assemble the clouds and influence the fields in different ways, and then above them there are other angels which exercise their influence. Natural sciences bear witness that angels are essential beings; we observe them with our own eyes.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 461-463]

Three Types of Angels

The Holy Qur'ān mentions three types of angels:

- (1) The particles of earthly bodies and the faculties of souls.
- (2) Heaven, the sun, the moon and the clouds of the earth that are in operation.
- (3) The higher powers above all these like Gabriel and Michael, 'Izrā'il and others which are called *Jum* in the Vedās....

The Holy Qur'ān uses the word angel very frequently. Everything that hears God's voice is His angel. Thus every particle of the world is an angel of God for it hears His voice and obeys Him.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 456-457]

Angels do not Move from their Appointed Places

Islāmic scholars do not affirm that angels descend upon the earth in person walking on their feet. This notion is obviously false for had it been necessary for the angels to descend upon the earth in their proper person for the performance of their functions it would have been impossible for them to carry out anything to its end. For instance, the angel of death takes possession in one second of the souls of thousands of people who dwell in

different countries and towns at long distances from each other. Were it necessary for him to travel on his feet to each country or town or home to take possession of the soul of each person, it would require not only one second to accomplish his task, but a period of many months would not be sufficient. Is it possible that someone moving like human beings should go around the world in the twinkling of an eye? Angels do not move an inch from the places appointed for them by God Almighty. God Almighty says on their behalf in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَمَا مَنَّا إِلَّا لَهُ مَقَامٌ مَّعْلُومٌ ۝ وَإِنَّا لَنَحْنُ الصَّافُّونَ ۝³⁷

(Sūrah Ṣāffāt, Part number 23)

As the sun occupies its station and its heat and light spreading upon the earth benefit everything, in the same way, the heavenly spirits whether they are called heavenly bodies according to the concept of the Greeks, or they are called the spirits of the planets in the terms of the Vedās, or we should call them in a straightforward way the angels of God, this wonderful creation occupies its appointed place and by the perfect Wisdom of God Almighty is occupied in carrying everything that is eager, to its desired goal. This creation performs external services as well as internal services. As our bodies and our overt faculties are influenced by the sun and the moon and other planets, in the same way, our hearts and minds and all our spiritual faculties are influenced by these angels according to our diverse capacities. Whatever possesses the capacity to become something excel-

³⁷ ‘(The angles say:) And there is not one of us but has an appointed station. And, verily, we are those who stand ranged in ranks.’—Al-Ṣāffāt, 37:165-166 [Publisher]

lent—even if it is a speck of dust, or is a drop of water which enters a pearl-oyster, or is a drop of water which enters the womb—by the spiritual training of the angels of God becomes a pearl, or a ruby, or an emerald, or a sapphire, or a man of superior heart and mind....

Angels are the Life of the Planets

The manner in which the Holy Qur'ān has expounded the subject of angels is straightforward and reasonable and there is no escape from accepting it. Deep reflection over the Holy Qur'ān discloses that for the development of man, and indeed for the external and internal development of the whole universe, some intermediaries are needed. It appears clearly from certain indications in the Qur'ān that some of the pure beings that are called angels have distinct relationship with heavenly bodies. Some of them drive the wind and some cause the rain to descend and some others cause other influences to descend upon the earth. There is no doubt that those pure creations would be related to the bright and illumined stars that are in heaven, but this relationship should not be deemed to be the relationship that exists between every animate and its soul. Those pure spirits have, on account of the brightness and light that they possess, an indeterminate spiritual relationship with the bright stars which is so strong that, if it were to be supposed that those pure spirits had departed from those stars, the faculties of the latter would be upset. It is through the hidden power of those spirits that the stars carry out their functions. It might be said that as God Almighty is, as it were, the life of the universe, those illumined spirits are, as it were, the life of the planets and stars and by their departure the condition of the planets and the stars is bound to be

disrupted. No one has ever differed that all the stars and planets in heaven are occupied all the time in the development and perfection of the earthly universe. It is a proved verity that all vegetables, minerals and animals are influenced day and night by heavenly planets. Even an ignorant peasant believes that the light of the moon fosters the size of fruits and that sunshine helps to ripen and sweeten them and certain winds increase their quantity. As the visible universe is developed through the influence of heavenly bodies, there can be no doubt that the invisible universe is, by the command of God Almighty, influenced by the bright spirits which have such a strong relationship with the bright heavenly bodies as the soul has with the body.

Angels Sometimes Appear in Human Form

Apparently it may seem disrespectful that there should be a mediator between God Almighty and His holy Prophets for the conveyance of the lights of revelation, but reflection would show that there is here no disrespect. It is in accord with the general law of God Almighty which is in operation with regard to everything and which can be clearly perceived. We observe that the Prophets also depend upon mediators in the matter of the operation of their bodies and their faculties. However illumined and blessed is the eye of a Prophet, yet, like the eyes of the common people, he cannot see anything without the help of the light of the sun or some substitute for it, and his ear cannot hear without the mediation of the air. Thus one is compelled to admit that the spirituality of a Prophet must be affected by the bright spirits of the stars even more than the spirituality of the common man for the clearer and more perfect is the capacity the clearer

and more perfect is the influence. The Holy Qur'ān shows that the stars and the planets each possess a spirit and as each of them has characteristics which influence everything in the earth according to their capacity, in the same way, their illumined spirits also possess diverse qualities which by the command of the All-Wise One influence the spirit of the earthly universe. These bright spirits appear in human form to perfect servants of God. These words are not rhetoric but the truth which must be accepted by everyone who seeks truth and wisdom.

[Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 66-72]

We do not deny the descent of angels and if anyone were to offer proof that the **angels** descend in such manner that they depart from heaven, we would be prepared to examine this proof and to accept it if it were established. The existence of angels is **part of faith**. The **descent of God towards the heaven of the world** and the descent of angels are both realities which we cannot comprehend. So much is established by the Book of God that angels appear on the earth as a **new creation**. The appearance of Gabriel in the form of **Deḥya Kalbī** was a new creation, or what else was it? It is not necessary that to admit the possibility of a new creation, we should destroy the first creation. The first creation is established and settled in heaven and the second creation is a result of God Almighty's wide power. Is it beyond the power of **God Almighty** that He should exhibit **one being** at two places in **two bodies**? Certainly not.

أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ³⁸

[Sirr-ul-Khilāfah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 8, pp. 414-415]

³⁸ 'Dost thou not know that Allāh has power to do all that He wills?'—Al-Baqarah, 2:107 [Publisher]

Ascent and Descent of Angels

I believe that to Allāh belong angels and that they are close to Him. For everyone of them there is an appointed place. None of them descends from that place or ascends from it. Their coming down that is mentioned in the Holy Qur’ān is not like the descending of a man from a higher to a lower level, nor is their ascending like the ascending of a man from a lower level to a higher level, inasmuch as the descending of a man involves a change in his position and is achieved by effort and involves fatigue; whereas angels do not suffer any fatigue nor have they to make any effort, nor are they subject to any change. Therefore, do not imagine that their descent and ascent resembles the descent and ascent of other bodies; their descent and ascent resembles the descent and ascent of Allāh from and to His Throne to and from the heaven of the earth. Allāh has made their existence a part of faith, and has said:

مَا يَعْلَمُ جُنُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ³⁹

‘None knows the hosts of thy Lord but He.’ Then believe in their descent and their ascent and do not seek to penetrate into their reality, that is best and closest to righteousness. Allāh has described them as standing, in prostration, arranged in rows, glorifying God and occupying their appointed places. He has bestowed these attributes upon them eternally and permanently and has made them characteristic of them. It is not, therefore, permissible that the angels should give up their prostration and their standing and should disrupt their rows, or should interrupt their glorification of God and their

³⁹ Al-Muddaththir, 74:32 [Publisher]

proclaiming His Holiness and should descend from their appointed places to the earth and should depart from the high heaven. Indeed they move in accord with their nature while still keeping to their appointed places like the King Who has settled Himself on the Throne. You know that Allāh descends to the heaven of the earth in the latter part of the night, but it cannot be said that He departs from His Throne and then ascends back to it later. The same is the case with the angels who reflect the attributes of their Lord as the shadow reflects the original. We do not realize the reality of it but we believe in it. We cannot describe their condition in the terms of the conditions of man, the reality of whose attributes and the limits of whose qualities and whose movements and whose stillness we recognize and understand. Allāh has forbidden us that and has said:

مَا يَعْلَمُ جُودَ رَبِّكَ إِلَّا هُوَ⁴⁰

“None knows the hosts of thy Lord but He.” Then mind your duty to Allāh, O men of wisdom.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 384-387]

Angels are the Cause of Every Change

Now that it is clearly established that by the Divine law of nature for the spiritual system there are, like the physical system, external influences which are called angels, it remains to show that whatever is happening in the physical system also does not take place without the mediation of angels. God Almighty has called angels regulators and distributors and they are the cause of every change and development. They bear aloft the

⁴⁰ Al-Muddaththir, 74:32 [Publisher]

Throne of God Almighty. The verse:

إِنَّ كُلَّ نَفْسٍ لَّمَّا عَلَيْهَا حَافِظٌ⁴¹

proves the appointment of angels over everything. The following verse of the Holy Qur'ān also indicates this:

وَأَنشَقَّتِ السَّمَاءُ فَهِيَ يَوْمَئِذٍ وَاهِيَةٌ وَالْمَلَكُ عَلَى أَرْجَائِهَا
وَيَحْمِلُ عَرْشَ رَبِّكَ فَوْقَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ ثَمَنِيَةٌ⁴²

This means that on the Day of Judgement heaven will be rent asunder, and appear loose and listless, and will lose its faculties, because the angels who were like the soul of the heavens and heavenly bodies will give up all the connections and will retire to the edges and on that day eight angels will bear aloft the Throne of God Almighty.

In his commentary on this verse Shāh ‘Abd-ul-‘Azīz writes that the continuation of heaven is through the spirits, that is to say, the angels who are like spirits of the heaven and heavenly bodies, and as the soul safeguards the body and controls it, in the same way some angels control heaven and heavenly bodies and all heavenly bodies exist through them and the action of the planets takes place through their means. When the angels will depart from that body as the soul departs from the physical body the whole system of heaven will be upset as the physical system is upset by the departure of the soul. Another verse of the Holy Qur'ān also indicates this:

وَلَقَدْ زَيَّنَّا السَّمَاءَ الدُّنْيَا بِمَصَافِيحَ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا رُجُومًا لِلشَّيَاطِينِ⁴³

(Sūrah Al-Mulk, Part Number 29)

⁴¹ ‘There is no soul but has a guardian over it.’—Al-Tāriq, 86:5 [Publisher]

⁴² Al-Hāqqah, 69:17-18 [Publisher]

⁴³ Al-Mulk, 67:6 [Publisher]

We have adorned the lowest heaven with lamps and we have made them the means of driving away satans.

It has been established by the Qur'ānic text that the regulators and distributors of all matters from the heaven to the earth are angels, and in this verse it is said that the shooting stars are the stars which are in the lower heaven. This might appear to contradict the verses relating to the angels, but if we consider carefully there is no contradiction. The Holy Qur'ān teaches that **the angels are like the souls of heaven and heavenly bodies and it is obvious that the soul of anything is not apart from it.** That is why God Almighty has in some places in the Holy Qur'ān mentioned the angels as the cause of shooting stars and at other places has mentioned the stars as their cause, inasmuch as angels influence the stars as the soul influences the body. That influence proceeds from the stars and affects the earthly vapours that have the capacity to become shooting stars and they are set aflame by the power of Almighty God. In another way, the angels establish a connection with the shooting stars and direct them to the right and left with their light. No philosopher will deny that whatever happens on the earth or in the atmosphere its originative cause are the stars and heavenly influences. Not everyone can penetrate the mystery that the faculties of the stars derive grace from the angels. This mystery was disclosed by the Holy Qur'ān and those possessing insight paid attention to it.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 137-143, footnote]

Everything that has a spirit is safeguarded by angels. Thus, according to this verse, we have to believe with regard to the spirit of the planets that **all stars, the sun, the moon, mercury and mars, etc.,** are under the protection of angels, that is to say, everyone of them has an angel

appointed who safeguards it and enables it to perform its functions properly.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 77 footnote]

Two Systems for the Proper Functioning of the Universe

Angels safeguard against physical calamities also, but this safeguarding is in a spiritual manner. For instance, if a person is standing at a place where a wall is about to fall down, no angel will lift him up with his hands and take him away from the place. If that person is destined to be saved, an angel would convey to him the warning that he should move away. But the protection of stars and elements, etc., is physical.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 99, footnote]

The All-Powerful One has not confined the events of the world to a visible system, but there is also an invisible system which is in operation all the time. The sun and the moon and the earth, and the vapours that become rain, and the winds that blow fiercely, and the hail that descends upon the earth and the shooting stars have physical causes for all their actions and changes and revolutions and occurrences which are set out in books on astronomy and physics, yet those who possess insight know that behind these causes there are other causes which regulate them and which are called **angels**. Whatever they are connected with, they carry it to its goal and in their functions they keep in mind the spiritual objects that God Almighty has committed to them. Their action is not vain but in all that they do they have in mind great objectives.

It is an established verity which we have set out in some

detail in our booklet Taudīḥ-e-Marām that the All-Wise One has instituted two systems for the proper functioning of the universe. The invisible system is related to the angels and there is no branch of the visible system which does not have the invisible system behind it. It can be easily understood, therefore, that the causes of the visible system of shooting stars do not stand in the way of the causes of the spiritual system. The spiritual system is that an **angel is appointed** on every shooting star, who moves it in whatever direction it desires. The movement of shooting stars bears witness to this. It is obvious that the function of the angel cannot be without purpose. Behind it must be some object which is of benefit for the faith and the world, but it is not possible to apprehend the purpose of the function of angels without the mediation of angels. Thus through the mediation of Gabriel (peace be on him) it was disclosed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that the object of the angels in the shooting of the stars is **to drive away satans**.

Shooting Stars and Satan

The mystery of how satans are driven away by the shooting of stars appears to be that there is enmity between satans and angels. At the time of the release of these shooting stars, whom they influence by the heat of the stars, the angels spread their bright power in the atmosphere and every shooting star that moves has an angelic life as it comes with the blessing of angels and it possesses a quality which consumes satans. It cannot, therefore, be objected that as jinns are created from fire, they cannot be harmed by fire. For the harm that is inflicted upon the jinns by the shooting stars is not caused by fire but by the light which accompanies the

shooting star which is lit by the angel and which by its nature **consumes the satans**.

So long as a person believes in the existence of God and is not an atheist, he would have to acknowledge that all this system is not in vain and that everything that happens issues from the wisdom and appropriate design of God Almighty, and that design is manifested in accordance with the system through physical means. As God Almighty has not invested bodies with knowledge and intelligence, therefore, for the achievement of that which needs knowledge and intelligence, the mediation of such things was needed which are invested with knowledge and intelligence and they are angels.

As angels do not operate in a vain and purposeless way, but have a purpose in all that they do, it would have to be acknowledged that they have a purpose in the release of shooting stars and, as reason is unable to perceive that purpose, it is useless to ask reason to solve this mystery....

Reason is dependent for this perception on some other means which is beyond the limit of reason. That means is revelation which is bestowed upon man so that it should carry him to those insights and verities to which reason alone has no access and so that it might disclose to him those fine mysteries which cannot be solved through reason. Here by revelation we mean the revelation of the Qur'ān which has disclosed to us that the purpose of the angels in releasing shooting stars is to drive away satans. This is the type of spreading of the light by the angels which affects the darkness of the jinns and reduces their activity, and if the spreading of this light is in a high degree, then on account of its magnetic attraction perfect

manifestations of light are created from among men, otherwise, this spreading of the light on account of its angelic quality pulls the hearts towards light and righteousness and this is a quality the proof of which has always been displayed in the world....

The Divine system is that what is happening in the bodies and the atmosphere, or becomes manifest on occasion, is not the result of the purposeless action of the bodies. The Wise and Powerful One has committed the direction of all these into the hands of the angels, who are occupied with various types of action every moment under the command of the All-Powerful One. They do not act in vain, but cause various types of movement in heaven and earth in an altogether wise way for the achievement of grand purposes. No action of theirs is useless or meaningless.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 124-133, footnote]

Man Ranks Higher than Angels

It should be remembered that in Islāmic law special angels do not rank higher than special persons. Indeed, the latter rank higher than the former. Their being mediators in the physical or the spiritual system does not indicate their superiority. According to the Holy Qur'ān, they are assigned this function as servants; as Allāh the Glorious has said:

وَسَخَّرَكُمُ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ⁴⁴

The God Who has placed the Sun and the Moon at your service.

A postman conveys the letters of a Ruler to a Governor,

⁴⁴ Ibrāhīm, 14:34 [Publisher]

or a Governor-General, but that does not mean that the postman who acts as an agent between the Ruler and the Governor-General ranks higher than the Governor-General. The same is the case with the mediators, who convey the designs of the All-Powerful in the physical and spiritual systems to the earth and occupy themselves in carrying them out. God, the Glorious, has made it clear at several places in the Holy Qur'ān that whatever has been created in earth and heaven is for the benefit of man and man ranks higher and above all of them and is served by them, as it is said:

وَسَخَّرَكُمُ الشَّمْسُ وَالْقَمَرَ ذَاتِي ٤٥

.... At another place it is said:

إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّیْ خَالِقٌ بَشَرًا مِّنْ طِیْنٍ ۝ فَاِذَا سَوَّيْتُهُ وَنَفَخْتُ فِیْهِ مِنْ رُّوْحِیْ فَقَعُوْا لَهٗ سٰجِدٰتٍ ۝ فَسَجَدَ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ كُلُّهُمْ اٰجَمْعُوْنَ ۝ اِلَّاۤ اِبْلِیْسَ ٤٦

Call to mind when thy Lord (of Whom you are the ultimate manifestation) said to the angels: I am about to bring into being a man from clay, so when I have perfected him and have breathed into him My spirit, do ye all fall down in prostration before him, that is, occupy yourselves in serving him with great humility and be so subservient as if you were lying in prostration before him. So the angels all fell down in prostration before the perfect man, except Satan, who deprived himself of this good fortune.

⁴⁵ 'And He has pressed into your service the sun and the moon moving constantly.'—Ibrāhīm, 14:34 [Publisher]

⁴⁶ Ṣād, 38:72-75 [Publisher]

The True Meaning of Prostration to Man

This command to the angels to fall into prostration did not relate to the time when Adam was brought into being; it was a separate command that when a man attains his full stature as a human being and achieves a balance, and the spirit of God Almighty takes up its dwelling in him, they should fall into prostration before such a perfect man, that is to say, they should descend upon him with heavenly lights and should call down blessings upon him. This is an indication of the eternal law which God Almighty puts into force with regard to His elect, that when any person achieves spiritual balance in any age and the spirit of God Almighty takes up its dwelling in him, that is to say, he loses his ego and achieves the rank of immortality in God, angels begin to descend upon him in a special manner. Though in the early stages of his search angels also occupy themselves with his help and service, yet this special descent of angels is so perfect and complete that it can be described as prostration. Prostration indicates that angels are not superior to perfect man, but like royal servants, they pay reverence to perfect man by prostrating themselves before him.

[Taudīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3 pp. 74-77]

Every Angel Performs a Specific Duty

Angels do not all have the same status and rank and do not all perform the same kind of function. Every angel is assigned a different task. Whatever changes take place in the world, and whatever emerges as action out of latent power, and whatever success is achieved by souls and bodies in their goals are all affected by heavenly influences. Sometimes the same angel influences different

types of capacities in different ways. For instance, Gabriel, who is an archangel and is related to a very bright heavenly body, is assigned many forms of service in accordance with the services performed by that heavenly body. Though he descends upon every person who is honoured with Divine revelation (it should be remembered that the true nature of descent is by way of influence, and not in any real sense).

The circle of the effect of his descent assumes small or great proportions according to different capacities. The largest circle of his spiritual effects is that which is related to the revelation that was sent down to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). For this reason the insights and verities and the excellencies of wisdom and composition which are found in their perfection and completeness in the Holy Qur'ān are not found to the same degree in any other book.

It should be borne in mind that the effect of an angel on a human spirit is of two types. First, the effect which by the command of Allāh influences different types of seed in diverse manners in the womb. Secondly, the effect that comes into operation after his coming into being for the purpose of carrying to their perfection the hidden capacities of that being. This second effect, when it is related to a Prophet or perfect saint, is called revelation. It appears that when an eager spirit through the excellence of its light of faith and light of love establishes a friendly relationship with the Fountainhead of grace, and the life-giving love of God Almighty casts its reflection on his love, then whatever ability is conferred upon him to move forward is the manifestation of the hidden effect which God's angel produces in him while he is in the womb. When the person concerned attains to this rank by

the attraction of the first effect, then the same angel casts his influence afresh on him which is filled with light.

The angel does not do this on his own but in his capacity of a mediatory servant; like a pipe which draws water from one side and conveys it to the other, this pipe draws into itself the light of Divine grace and, when man on account of the union of two loves places himself next to the pipe of the Holy Spirit, the grace of revelation flows through that pipe into him. In other words, at that time Gabriel casts his bright shadow on that eager heart and inscribes a reflected picture of himself in it. As the name of the angel who is stationed in heaven is Gabriel, the name of this reflected picture is also Gabriel. If the name of the angel is the Holy Spirit, the name of the reflected picture also is the Holy Spirit. It is not that the angel enters into the man, but his reflection appears in the heart of the man. For instance, when you place a very clear mirror opposite to your face then according to the size of the mirror your features will be reflected in the mirror. It is not that your face and your head being separated from your body are placed in the mirror. They will retain their place in your body. What will be reflected in the mirror is their picture and the size of the reflection will be in accord with the size of the mirror of the heart. For instance, if you look at your face in a small mirror in a ring you will see the whole of your face but every feature will appear very small, but if you look at your face in a large mirror, which is sufficient for the reflection of all your features, you will behold the reflection of all your features and limbs at their proper size. The same is the case with the effect of Gabriel. It is Gabriel who casts the effect of revelation on the heart even of a minor saint, and the same Gabriel used to cast the effect of revelation

on the heart of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). But the difference between the two revelations is like the difference in the reflection in the mirror of the ring and in a large mirror. Though it is the same Gabriel and he has the same effects yet not all matter that is affected has the same extent and the same clearness.

The difference of the effects of Gabriel is not only in their quantity but is also with regard to their quality. That is to say, the purity of heart which is the condition of reflection is not of the same degree in all recipients of revelation. As you can observe not all mirrors possess the same degree of transparency. Some are so clear and bright that the reflection of the beholder is seen in its perfection in them, and some are so opaque and dusty and smoky that the reflection cannot be seen clearly in them. Indeed, some are so distorted that if the lips are visible in the reflection the nose is not, and if the nose is visible the eyes are not. The same is the case with the mirrors of the hearts. In a heart that is of the utmost purity the reflection is very clear and in a heart which is dusty, to some degree, the reflection is also vague to the same degree. This purity was possessed to a complete and perfect degree by the heart of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him); no other heart possessed such purity.

[*Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 85-88]

I wonder at the intelligence of people who consider the mediation of vapours as essential for rain which comes down from the clouds and deem it impossible for rain to descend without clouds, but for the rain of revelation which falls upon pure hearts, they laugh out of their ignorance at the mediation of angels which is essential

according to the law. They ask whether God Almighty could not send down revelation direct without the mediation of angels. They admit that it is contrary to the law of nature that a sound should be heard without the mediation of air, but they are unaware of the law of nature whereby that air is needed which would spiritually carry the voice of God Almighty to the hearts of the recipients of revelation. They agree that to enable physical eyes to see the light of the sun is necessary, but they do not concede the need of any heavenly light for spiritual eyes.

Now we know the Divine law, that this universe with all its physical and spiritual faculties is like the limbs of God. Everything in its place and time operates as such limbs. Every design of God Almighty is manifested through these limbs, and no design is manifested without their mediation. It should be realized that the relationship of Gabriel to Divine revelation that descends upon pure hearts, which is recognized as essential in Islāmic law, depends upon the true philosophy that we have just mentioned. According to the law of nature that we have mentioned for the communication of revelation or for the bestowal of the capacity to receive revelation, it is necessary that some creation should serve as a limb for the manifestation of the Divine design of revelation as is the case with the fulfilment of physical Divine designs. That limb is, in other words, called Gabriel, who following a movement of the Divine, immediately comes into motion like a limb. When God Almighty turns with love towards a heart that loves Him, then according to the law that we have just mentioned Gabriel, who is related to God Almighty like the air of the breath, or the light of the eye, has also to move simultaneously. In other words,

with the movement of God Almighty, Gabriel also comes into motion involuntarily as the shadow moves with the movement of the original. When the light of Gabriel comes into motion under the power of attraction and motion of the illumined breath of God Almighty, then simultaneously a reflection of it, which should be called the Holy Spirit, is inscribed in the heart of the sincere lover and becomes a necessary part of his true love. Then this power bestows the capacity of an ear for hearing the voice of God and becomes a substitute for eyes for beholding His wonders and works like inspiring heat for causing His revelation to flow from the tongue and guides the tongue forcefully along the lines of the revelation. Till this faculty is created man's heart is blind and his tongue is like a railway wagon which is disconnected from the locomotive. It must, however, be borne in mind that this faculty which is called the Holy Spirit is not produced to the same degree in every heart, but according to the degree of a man's love this light of Gabriel affects him.

It should also be remembered that this power of the Holy Spirit, which by the meeting of the two loves is produced in the heart of man by the reflection of the light of Gabriel, does not mean that a person should constantly hear the word of God Almighty or should constantly behold something through visions. It is a means for the absorbing of heavenly lights. In other words, it is a spiritual light to enable spiritual eyes to see, or is spiritual air for conveying sound to spiritual ears from God. It is obvious that unless there is something within sight mere light cannot exhibit anything, and that unless words issue from the mouth of a speaker no voice can be carried to the ears. This light or air is a heavenly aid which is

bestowed for spiritual senses, as for physical eyes the light of the sun and for physical ears air have been appointed as a medium.

When God Almighty designs to convey His word to the heart of a recipient of revelation then instantaneously a wave of light or a wave of air or a wave of heat for moving the tongue of the recipient of revelation is created in the light of Gabriel for conveyance, and in consequence of this wave or heat simultaneously that text appears before the eyes of the recipient of revelation in writing, or its sound reaches his ears, or its words flow from his tongue. Spiritual senses and spiritual light, which are bestowed as a faculty before revelation, are so bestowed so that before its descent the capacity to receive it should be created. Had it descended at a time when the heart of the recipient did not possess spiritual senses, or the light of the Holy Spirit had not reached his eye or his heart, then through the pure light of what eyes could he have perceived the Divine revelation? It is on account of this need that these two faculties are bestowed in advance upon the recipients of revelation.

Three Functions of Gabriel

Gabriel has three functions relating to revelation. First, when the womb receives the seed of a person whose nature God the Glorious, out of His *Rahmāniyyat*—with which man has nothing to do—desires to make him capable of receiving revelation, He casts the reflection of the light of Gabriel on him in that very condition. Then such a person's nature develops, under Divine direction, the capacity for receiving revelation and he acquires senses for the receipt of revelation.

Secondly, when the love of a servant falls under the

shadow of Divine love then, on account of the providential movement of God Almighty, a movement is produced in the light of Gabriel and that light falls on the heart of the true lover. That is to say, a reflection of that light falls on his heart and produces in it a reflection of Gabriel which operates as light or air or heat and dwells within him as a faculty for the receipt of revelation. One end of it is sunk in the light of Gabriel and the other enters into the heart of the recipient of revelation. This, in other words, is called the Holy Spirit or its reflection.

Thirdly, it is the function of Gabriel that when Divine word manifests itself he comes into motion like a wave and carries the word to the ears of the heart, or being illumined like light presents it to the eyes or, in the guise of heat, causes the tongue to utter the words of the revelation.

[Taudīh-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 91-94]

When Divine love descends upon human love, then by the meeting of the two a bright and perfect shadow of the **Holy Spirit** is created in the heart of man. At this stage of communion the light of the Holy Spirit is very bright. Extraordinary feats of power, which we have just mentioned, proceed from such people because the **light of the Holy Spirit** is ever present with them and dwells within them and this light never departs from them and they are never separated from it. That light issues from them every moment with their breath and falls upon everything with their look and exhibits its brightness in their words. The name of this light is the Holy Spirit, but this is not the Holy Spirit itself for the Holy Spirit itself is in heaven. This Holy Spirit is a reflection which dwells forever in pure breasts and hearts and brains and does not depart from them even for a moment. Anyone who thinks

that at any time the **Holy Spirit** with all its effects departs from them is entirely based upon falsehood and insults the holy elect of God Almighty by his dark thought. But it is true, that although the real Holy Spirit remains at its station, **its reflection, which is metaphorically called the Holy Spirit**, enters into the breasts and hearts and brains and limbs of those who, **after attaining the station of immortality (*Baqā*) and communion with God (*Liqā*)**, become fit for the perfect love of God Almighty with all its blessings to descend upon their pure and undefiled love. When that Holy Spirit descends it establishes a relationship with that person like the relationship of the soul with the body. It becomes the faculty of sight and works in the eyes, and putting on the garment of the faculty of hearing bestows spiritual sense on the ears, it becomes the power of speech of the tongue and the righteousness of the heart and the intelligence of the brain and flows through the hands and affects the feet. In short, it lifts all darkness from the body and illumines it from the hair of the head to the nails of the toes. Were it to depart for a moment, darkness would immediately take its place. It is such a **good companion** for the perfect people that it does not depart from them for a moment and to imagine that it can depart from them would be a confession that after entering into light they fall again into darkness, and that after having been protected and made secure their evil-directing minds revert to them and that after they are bestowed spiritual senses, those senses are rendered useless and are suspended....

Every light, comfort, satisfaction., blessing, steadfastness, and every spiritual bounty, is **bestowed upon the elect through the Holy Spirit**. As for the disbelievers and the wicked, **Satan** has been appointed **their evil companion** for

all time so that he might spread darkness over them every moment and should not leave them alone in their standing and sitting and movement and rest and sleep and waking. **Similarly** for those who are close to God, the **Holy Spirit has been appointed as a good companion** for all time so that it should constantly rain down light upon them and should support them every moment and should not depart from them at any time.

It is obvious that in contrast with the **evil companion** who is the servant and colleague of the wicked, it is necessary that the **good companion should always keep company with those who are close to God**, and the Holy Qur'ān confirms this. Our opponents, however, imagine and assert that the Holy Spirit is the name of **Gabriel** who sometimes descends from heaven and is in close contact with the elect, so much so, that he enters into their hearts, and sometimes he leaves them alone and separates himself from them and **ascends to heaven** at a measureless distance, and cutting off altogether from the elect conceals himself in his station. They are then deprived altogether of the light and blessing which at the time of his descent pervades their hearts and brains and their very hair. If such should be the case, **would it not follow** that after the departure of the **Holy Spirit** those elect are again surrounded by darkness and in place of the **good companion** they are subjected to the influence of the **evil companion**?

Now keep in mind the fear of God and reflect **whether it is consistent with respect and faith and insight and the love of the Holy Prophet** (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) to imagine that he was subject to this defective condition that the **Holy Spirit** departed from him for days, and that during such periods he was deprived of the holy lights which are a reflection of the **Holy Spirit**. Is it not an irony

that the **Christians** should believe firmly that from the moment that the **Holy Spirit** descended on Jesus it never departed from him and that he was supported every moment by the Holy Spirit, so much so, that it did not depart from him even in his sleep and that it never ascended to heaven leaving him alone and deserted and that the light of the Holy Spirit never departed from him for a moment; and **that the Muslims should believe** that the Holy Spirit some times separated himself from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him).

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 72-75]

Angels Descend with the Advent of a *Khalīfah*

Someone might wonder what is the meaning of the descent of angels? It is the way of Allāh that when a Messenger or a Prophet or a *Muḥaddath* descends from heaven for the reform of people, such angels descend with him who convey guidance to eager hearts and incline them towards good, and they continue their descent till the darkness of disbelief and misguidance is removed and the dawn of faith and righteousness appears. As Allāh the Glorious says:

تَنْزِيلُ الْمَلَائِكَةِ وَالرُّؤْيَا فِيهَا يَأْذِنُ رَبُّهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ أَمْرٍ
سَلَامٌ هِيَ حَتَّى مَطْلَعِ الْفَجْرِ⁴⁷

Thus the descent of angels and of the Holy Spirit from heaven takes place when a great personality invested with the robe of *Khilāfat* and honoured with the word of God descends to the earth. Such a one is specially bestowed

⁴⁷ 'Therein descend angels and the Spirit with their Lord's decrees concerning everything. Peace – so will it be even at the rising of the dawn.'—Al-Qadr, 97:5-6 [Publisher]

the Holy Spirit and the angels who accompany him descend on the eager hearts of the whole world. Then, wherever people possessing appropriate capacity are found, the reflection of that light falls upon them and a glow spreads over the whole universe. Through the holy influence of the angels good ideas surge up in the hearts and the Unity of God becomes dear. A spirit of truth-loving and truth-seeking is breathed into hearts that are straightforward, and the weak are strengthened and a wind begins to blow which helps the purpose and goal of that reformer. By the urging of a hidden hand, people begin to move towards goodness and a movement starts among nations. Then the ignorant ones imagine that the ideas of the world have of themselves taken a turn in the direction of truth, but in reality it is the doing of the angels who descend from heaven with God's *Khalīfah* and bestow extraordinary powers for accepting and understanding the truth. They awaken those who are asleep, and alert those who are heedless, and open the ears of the deaf, and breathe the spirit of life into the dead and pull out those who are in the graves. Then suddenly, people begin to open their eyes and their hearts begin to perceive those matters which were previously hidden.

These angels are not something separate from God's *Khalīfah*. They are the light of His countenance and they are the bright signs of His resolve who, by their magnetic power, draw to themselves everyone who is in accord with them whether physically he is near or far, or whether he is known or is a stranger, and is even unaware of the name of the *Khalīfah*. Whatever movement towards good takes place at the time and whatever eagerness for the acceptance of truth is generated, whether in the peoples of Asia, or of Europe, or of

America, is manifested through the urging of the angels that descend with God's *Khalīfah*. This is Divine law which never changes and is easy to understand.

[Fath-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 12-13, footnote]

This humble one knows **from his own experience** that the **holiness of the Holy Spirit** operates all the time without cessation in all the faculties of the recipient of revelation, and that without the influence of the **holiness** of the Holy Spirit, he cannot safeguard himself against impurities for a moment. The cause of permanent lights and steadfastness and love and sinlessness and blessings is that the Holy Spirit is with him always and all the time. Then how can it be imagined with regard to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that at any time he was left without these blessings and purity and lights.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 93-94, footnote]

It is worthy of note that these *Maulavīs* have raised Jesus high in everything and have insulted our lord and master the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). It is to be deplored that with regard to Jesus they believe that the Holy Spirit never departed from him and that he was free from the touch of Satan, and that these two characteristics were special to him, but with regard to the **Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him)** their belief is that neither the Holy Spirit remained with him all the time, nor was he free (God forbid) from the touch of Satan. Despite such beliefs they are called Muslims. In their estimation our lord and master Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is dead, but Jesus is still alive and that the Holy Spirit is a permanent companion of Jesus, but that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on

him) is (God forbid) deprived of this bounty and that Jesus is safeguarded against the touch of Satan, but that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is not thus safeguarded. Who can estimate the harm that is being done to Islām in this age by people who have such beliefs? They are hidden enemies of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and every Muslim and true lover of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) should avoid them.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 110-111]

The same is the case with a deductive error of a Prophet. The Holy Spirit never departs from a Prophet, but on some occasions for some purpose of His own, God Almighty takes possession of the intelligence and perception of a Prophet and in such a condition some word or action proceeds from him in forgetfulness or error and then the Divine design becomes apparent. The river of revelation then flows in strength and the error is erased as if it never existed. Jesus advanced towards a fig tree to eat of its fruit and though he was accompanied by the Holy Spirit, it failed to warn him that the tree bore no fruit at the time. It must, however, be understood that that which is rare is as if it did not exist. In a million words and actions of **our lord and master Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him)** is observed a clear **manifestation of the Divine** and the shining lights of the Holy Spirit are seen in all his movements and words and actions. Then of what consequence is it if his humanness is displayed in one or two matters. Indeed, it was necessary that this should sometimes happen so that his humanness might be confirmed and people should not get involved in *shirk*.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 115-116]

The Holy Spirit Descends According to One's Degree of Love and Sincerity

A question is raised that if the **Holy Spirit** is bestowed only upon those Divine favourites who arrive at the stage of survival (*Baqā*) and meeting (*Liqā*), then how can it safeguard everyone? The answer is that the perfect descent of the Holy Spirit takes place upon Divine favourites, but its **general** support is enjoyed also by others according to their degree of love and sincerity. The **higher manifestation** of the Holy Spirit takes place when, at the stage of survival and meeting, Divine love descends upon human love and the meeting of the two loves produces that manifestation of the Holy Spirit compared with which other manifestations are as nothing. This does not mean that other manifestations do not take place at all. God Almighty does not let even a particle of sincere love go to waste. When His love descends upon the love of man, the Holy Spirit shines to the same degree. It is a firm Divine law that Divine love descends according to the degree of everyone's love, and when the river of human love flows a river of love descends from the other side, and when the two rivers meet a great light is generated which in our idiom is called the Holy Spirit. You will notice that if a teaspoonful of sugar is added to a jug of water, the water will not taste sweet, but it cannot be said that no sugar was added to it. This is the case with the Holy Spirit that descends in a deficient way upon deficient people. Its descent is not to be doubted for the idea of good is generated in the mind of the lowest person by the Holy Spirit. Sometimes a wicked evil-doer also sees a true dream and that is the effect of the Holy Spirit as is proved by the Holy Qur'ān and true *Aḥādīth*, but as compared to its great relationship

with the holy ones and favourites of God, it amounts to nothing and is as if it did not exist.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 77-80, footnote]

Angels can be Seen

Why angels are not visible is a useless speculation. The angels, like God Almighty, are imperceptible beings. Then how can they be visible to our physical eyes? Is God Almighty, whose existence is admitted by even these philosophers, visible to physical eyes? Besides, it is not true that angels cannot be beheld in any way. Those who possess insight behold angels with their spiritual eyes in their visions which they experience very often in a state of wakefulness. They talk to the angels and learn many things from them. I call God to witness that I am telling the truth when I say that I have, on many occasions, seen angels in my visions and have learnt things from them and have been told of past or future events which turn out to be facts. Then how can I say that angels are not visible? They are doubtless visible, but with other eyes. As these people laugh at these things, those who possess insight weep at their condition. If they were to keep company with me they could be satisfied through visions, but the trouble is that they suffer from arrogance which does not permit them to come over in humility as seekers after truth.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 181-183, footnote]

Angels are Mediators for the Spiritual Development of Man

One of the questions raised is: Why does God Almighty need angels for putting His designs into effect? Does His kingdom depend upon His staff like human governments

and does He need armies as they need them?

The answer is that God Almighty does not need anything, angels or sun or moon or stars, but He desired that His powers should be exhibited through the mediation of means so that thereby wisdom and knowledge should spread among people. If there had been no mediation of means, there would have been no astronomy, or physics, or medicine, or botany. It is the employment of means that gave rise to these sciences. If you will reflect you will find that if there is any objection to the employment of angels, the same objection applies to putting the sun and moon and stars and vegetables and minerals and elements into service. Anyone who possesses insight knows that every particle works in accordance with the Divine design and that a drop of water that goes inside us cannot produce any favourable or unfavourable effect upon our body without the command of God. Thus, all particles and heavenly bodies are in reality types of angels, who occupy themselves day and night with service; some serve the human body and others serve the human soul. The All-Wise, Who chose the mediation of means for the physical development of man and created many physical mediators to influence the human body in diverse ways, the same One without associate, Whose works have unity and symmetry, chose that man's spiritual development should also follow the system which has been adopted for his physical development so that the two systems, the external and the internal, and the physical and the spiritual, through their balance and harmony, should point to the **One Creator, Who regulates everything by His will.**

This is the reason why, for the spiritual and physical development of man, angels were appointed as media-

tors. All these mediators are under the control of God Almighty like a machine which is run by His holy hand. They have no will of their own, nor do they exercise any control. As the air influences our body by Divine command and goes out of it by His command, the same is the case with angels:

يَفْعَلُونَ مَا يُؤْمَرُونَ⁴⁸

It is a pity that **Pundit Dayānand** has raised an objection against the system of angels. Would that he had knowledge of God's physical and spiritual systems so that instead of raising objections he would have been convinced of the excellencies of the teaching of the Qur'ān, which presents a correct and true picture of the law of nature.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 85-88, footnote]

Angels Distribute and Regulate Matters

It is asked that if angels are the regulators and distributors of matters, then how is it that our plans succeed and most matters are concluded according to our will through our projects and plans? The answer is that our projects and plans are not independent of the mediation of angels and their suggestions and revelation. The functions that the angels perform by the command of God Almighty, they perform through persons who are naturally inclined towards acceptance of the suggestions of angels. For instance, when the angels desire to bring down rain upon a field, or a village, or a country with God's command, they cannot themselves become water nor can they make fire to perform the function of water, but they guide the

⁴⁸ 'They do what they are commanded.'—Al-Naḥl, 16:51 [Publisher]

clouds to the goal and, becoming regulators, cause rain to descend in accord with the quantity and to the limit that has been determined. The clouds possess all those faculties which are possible in a lifeless article which has no will and no intelligence and which are in accord with its condition and the character of its elements. The function of the angels is distribution and regulation. That is why they are called distributors and regulators. The suggestion and revelation that the angels communicate are according to the nature of the person concerned. The revelation that they communicate to God's elect, they cannot communicate to others. Indeed, they pay no attention to it at all.

Every person receives grace from the suggestions of angels according to his capacity. The help of angels is received in respect of the art or science to which one is inclined. For instance, when it is the Divine design that someone's constipation should be overcome by a medicine, an angel suggests to the physician the medicine that should be administered to him. The physician prescribes the medicine and with the help of angels the system of the patient accepts it and does not throw it out and the angels influence the action of the medicine and create a reaction in the body and the undesirable matter is expelled from the body by the command of God. By His extreme Wisdom and perfect Power, God Almighty does not let the system of external arts and sciences go to waste and does not suspend His Divine control and possession. Had God Almighty not possessed this minute control over the conditions of His creation and its continuation and destruction, He would not have been God, nor would His Unity have been established. It is true, however, that God Almighty has not desired that all these mysteries should become obvious and visible to the

mysteries should become obvious and visible to the eyes of the world for if they had been obvious there would have been no merit in believing in them.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 185-188, footnote]

Functions of the Holy Spirit and Satan

One of the questions raised is: If the Holy Spirit is appointed to restrain a person from evil conduct, then why does he commit sin and why is he involved in disbelief and disobedience and vice? The answer is that God Almighty has for the purpose of testing man appointed **two spiritual callers**; one **caller to good** whose name is the Holy Spirit and the other **caller to vice**, whose name is Iblīs and Satan. These two callers only call to good or evil but do not exercise any compulsion as is indicated in the verse:

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا⁴⁹

This means that God reveals the wrong and the right....

The means of revealing the wrong is Satan, who makes evil suggestions, and the means of revealing the right is the Holy Spirit, who puts pure thoughts in the heart. As God Almighty is the **Cause of causes** He has attributed both these types of revelation to Himself because all this system is instituted by Him. Otherwise, what power would Satan have to make evil suggestions to anyone's heart and what power would the Holy Spirit have to guide anyone along the paths of righteousness?

Our opponents the Āryās, the Brahmūs and the Christians, out of their short-sightedness, raise an objection to the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān that according to it God

⁴⁹ Al-Shams, 91:9 [Publisher]

Almighty has Himself set Satan after man and thus He desires to mislead mankind, but this is a mistake. They ought to know that the Holy Qur'ān does not teach that Satan can exercise compulsion for leading anyone astray. Nor is it the teaching that Satan is appointed only for the purpose of calling to evil. The teaching is that this is a trial and a test. Man has been equally bestowed **the touch of angels and the touch of Iblīs**, one calling to good and the other to evil so that being confronted with this trial man should acquire merit or should become subject to chastisement. If only one type of means had been provided, for instance, if all man's external and internal emotions had drawn him only towards good, or if his nature had been such that he would not have been capable of doing anything except good, then there was no reason that he could have been awarded any rank of nearness to God on account of his good actions, inasmuch as all his means and emotions would have been for doing good and the desire of evil would from the beginning have been absent from his nature. In such case by what right could he have deserved merit for avoiding vice? For instance, if a person who from the beginning lacks sexual power and has no desire for women, should claim that he passed a certain time in the company of young beautiful women, but that he is so pious that he did not look upon them with desire even once and feared God all the time, there is no doubt that everyone would laugh at him. They would inquire from him when did he possess such power, for restraining which he could take pride in himself or could hope for merit.

It should be realized that in his elementary and intermediary conditions all hopes of merit of a seeker are created by opposing emotions and if in those stages his nature

should be such that he cannot commit any vice, he cannot deserve any merit either. For instance, our systems do not secrete, like scorpions and snakes, a kind of poison through which we could hurt anyone like scorpions and snakes. We cannot, therefore, deserve any merit in the estimation of Allāh by refraining from causing such harm.

This shows that opposing emotions which pull a person towards vice are the cause of merit for him, for when out of fear of God he discards such emotions, then he becomes worthy of praise in the estimation of God and wins His pleasure. He who arrives at the extreme point of virtue and is rid of all opposing motions as if his Satan had become a Muslim, would still deserve merit for he has traversed the stages of trial with great courage. A righteous person who in his youth has accomplished many great works receives merit for them even in his old age.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 80-85, footnote]

Some foolish people object to the existence of Satan, as if God Himself desired to lead people astray. This is not so. Every intelligent person can understand that everyone has two faculties, one is called the touch of Satan and the other is called the touch of angels. That is to say, human nature displays that sometimes through unknown means a good idea is generated in a person's mind and his heart inclines towards good works, and then sometimes an evil idea rises in his mind and he is inclined towards vice and wickedness and wrong and evil. The power that is the source of evil thoughts, according to the Qur'ānic teaching, is Satan, and the power that is the source of good ideas is an angel.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, p. 435]

If someone were to ask, why does Satan disobey God when he believes in His existence and Unity? The answer is that his disobedience is not like the disobedience of man; he has been created like that for the trial of man. This is a mystery the details of which have not been disclosed to man. It is the character of man that mostly he is guided aright by acquiring knowledge about God Almighty, as He says in the Holy Qur'ān:

لَا تَتَمَنَّاهُ يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ⁵⁰

but those who have a satanic character are outside this rule.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 122, footnote]

The Highest and Lowest Points of God's Creation

We have already stated that the possessor of extreme perfection whose being is situated at the highest point of the line of creation is the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and in contrast with him the meanest being who is situated at the extreme lowest point is called Satan. The being of Satan is not apparent and felt, but observing this system of the line of creation, we have to confess that as at the highest point of exaltation is a being who is good personified who appeared in the world as a guide towards good, in contrast there should be at the extreme lowest point a being who incites towards evil and pulls towards it. For this reason in the heart of every person there is found internally the effect of both these beings. The holy effect of Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) the

⁵⁰ 'Only those of His servants who possess knowledge fear Allāh.'—Fāṭir, 35:29 [Publisher]

pure being who is also called the Spirit of Truth and Light, calls every heart to goodness and virtue through holy emotions and inner attention. To the degree to which anyone develops love and relationship with him, he is bestowed the faculty of faith and light spreads in his heart so that he takes on his colour and acquires by way of reflection all those excellencies that belong to him. The influence of the being who incites towards evil, that is to say, Satan, whose station is the extreme lowest point, pulls everyone whose heart has any relationship with him, towards *shirk*. To the degree to which anyone establishes a relationship with him, to that degree his thinking turns to disbelief and wickedness so that when he acquires a complete resemblance to him he takes on his colour and becomes a complete Satan and acquires all the grades of wickedness which belong to Satan. In the same manner, the friends of Raḥmān and the friends of Satan are pulled in different directions according to their relationship.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 248-251, footnote]

5

PRAYER

I say truly that if crying before God Almighty is full of utmost humility, it moves His grace and mercy and draws them (towards the supplicator). I can say out of my own experience that I have felt the grace and mercy of God, which comes in the shape of the acceptance of prayer, coming towards me. Indeed, I rather say that I have actually seen it. If the dark-minded philosophers of this age cannot feel it or see it, this verity is not going to disappear from the world, more so because I am ready to demonstrate the acceptance of prayer at all times.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, p. 198]

A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE BOOKLETS OF SIR SAYYED AḤMAD KHĀN ṢĀḤIB K.C.S.I.

Prayer, its Acceptance, and the Principle of Qur'ānic Interpretation

O prisoner of your own intellect, do not be too proud of
yourself;

This wonderful celestial sphere has brought forth many
like you.

One alienated from God can never find access to His
court;

Secrets of that Beloved are revealed only to those who
come from heaven.

To fathom the secrets of the Holy Qur'ān on one's own
is a false notion;

Whoever invents meanings by himself invents only filth and carrion.

In his booklets, Sayyed Ṣāhib sets forth his belief that:

The acceptance of prayer does not mean that the supplicant should be given what he asks for. If this should be the meaning of the acceptance of prayer two difficulties would be encountered. The first would be that thousands of supplications that are made most humbly and earnestly are not fulfilled, which means that the prayer has not been accepted, whereas God has promised acceptance of prayer. The second difficulty is that that which is to happen is determined and so is that which is not to happen. Nothing can happen contrary to that determination. If acceptance of prayer means granting the request made, then the Divine promise:

أَدْعُونِي أَجْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ⁵¹

is not fulfilled concerning supplications the granting of which is not determined. According to this interpretation, the general promise of acceptance of prayer will be falsified inasmuch as only those requests are granted the fulfilment of which is determined, and yet the promise of acceptance of prayer is general and is not subject to any exception. Some verses indicate that those things which are not determined will not be granted and some verses indicate that no supplication is rejected and that all are accepted. The verse:

أَدْعُونِي أَجْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ⁵²

shows that God has promised the acceptance of all prayers. Thus, the only way of reconciling this contra-

⁵¹ 'Pray unto Me, I will answer your prayer.'—Al-Mu'min, 40:61
[Publisher]

⁵² Ibid.

diction between the verses is that the acceptance of prayer should be interpreted as meaning the acceptance of an act of worship, that is to say, that prayer should be interpreted as a type of worship concerning which there is a Divine promise of acceptance when it is offered in the sincerity and earnestness of the heart. The acceptance of prayer is, therefore, no more than that it earns merit by being regarded as a type of worship. If the bestowal of something has been determined and it is also prayed for, it is bestowed not because of the prayer, but because it had been determined upon. The great benefit of prayer is that when at the time of prayer the heart is fixed upon the greatness of God and His limitless power that idea overcomes all the apprehensions which were the cause of restlessness and the suppliant experiences patience and steadfastness. This condition of the heart is produced by worship and this is what the acceptance of prayer is. Sayyed Şāhib observes that those people who are unaware of the reality of prayer and of the wisdom that is inherent in it can say that if that which is not determined cannot happen, then prayer is of no use. That is to say, that that which is determined will happen in any case whether one offers a prayer in respect of it or not and that a thousand prayers will not help where the matter has not been determined, thus prayer is vain and useless. In answer to this Sayyed Şāhib says that to supplicate for help in a time of distress is a characteristic of human nature and a person supplicates on account of his natural characteristic without thinking whether what is being supplicated for will happen or not. On account of this characteristic of his nature he has been told to supplicate God for whatever he desires.

This summary of the view held by Sayyed Şāhib indicates that his belief is that prayer cannot be the means of

achieving one's goal, nor has it any effect on such achievement. If by prayer the only purpose of the supplicant is that through his supplication his request should be granted his purpose is vain, inasmuch as no prayer is needed for that which has been determined and for that which has not been determined, humility and earnestness are without avail. He believes that prayer is only a form of worship and it is vain to adopt it as a means of achieving a specific purpose.

We shall, *Inshā'Allāh* (God willing), show later that Sayyed Ṣāhib has woefully misunderstood the verses of the Holy Qur'ān. At this stage, we would observe with regret that if Sayyed Ṣāhib's intellect had fallen short of the meaning of the Holy Qur'ān, had he at the time of writing these booklets overlooked the law of nature which he claims to follow and which he regards as the interpreter of Divine guidance and of the hidden mysteries of the Holy Qur'ān?

Is Sayyed Ṣāhib not aware that though nothing good or ill in this world is free from determination, yet nature has appointed such means for the achieving of the good or the ill, the true and correct effect of which is not questioned by any wise person? For instance, though keeping in mind determination, to have recourse to a remedy in case of illness is the same as praying or not praying for an object. Yet would Sayyed Ṣāhib affirm that the science of medicine is altogether without any basis and that remedies have no effect whatever? If, despite his belief in determination, he is persuaded that remedies are not without effect, then why does he create a distinction between this law and a similar and parallel law? Does he believe that God had power to invest certain medicines with such powerful effects that their full dose should

immediately move the stomach, or that certain poisons should have such powerful effect that a full dose of them should dispatch the consumer from this world within a matter of minutes, yet He should leave as dead and without effect the supplications of His elect which are full of resolve and attention and earnestness? Is it possible that there should be a contradiction in the Divine system and that the Divine design which works for the welfare of His servants through medicines should not operate in the case of prayer?

That is not so. Sayyed Şāhib himself is unaware of the true philosophy of prayer and has no personal experience of its high effectiveness. His case is like that of a person who over a period uses a stale medicine which has lost all its effectiveness and then concludes, as a general rule, that that medicine is ineffective. Sayyed Şāhib has reached an advanced age, but the natural system, that determination is closely related to means, has eluded him. That is why he has fallen into the error that anything can happen without the intervention of the means which nature has appointed spiritually and physically. As a general rule, nothing is free from determination. A person who derives advantage from fire, water, air, clay, corn, vegetables, animals, or minerals, does so under the rule of determination; but if a stupid one should imagine that without the help of the means which God Almighty has appointed, and without treading the paths that have been fixed by nature, something might be acquired without the mediation of physical or spiritual means, such a one seeks to falsify the wisdom of God Almighty.

The meaning of all that Sayyed Şāhib has put forth is that he does not regard prayer as one of the effective means, the existence of which he admits, and that he has in this

matter gone beyond the limit. For instance, if someone mentions the effect of fire to him, he will not deny it. He will not affirm that if anyone's being burnt has been determined he would be burnt without the intervention of fire. Then I am surprised that despite being a Muslim he denies the effectiveness of prayer which sometimes lights up the darkness like fire and sometimes burns the hand of an impertinent intervener. Does he remember determination at the time of prayer and forget it when fire or the like is mentioned? Does not the same determination comprehend both? When, despite determination, he adheres so strongly to effective means that he has acquired an ill reputation in his exaggeration, then what is the reason that the system of nature which he acknowledges is forgotten by him in the matter of prayer, so much so that while in his view a fly has some effect, yet prayer has none? The truth is that he is unaware of the effect of prayer and has no personal experience of it, nor has he had the advantage of keeping company with those who have such experience.

Miracles are Wrought by Prayer

The subject of the acceptance of prayer is a branch of the subject of prayer. A person who does not comprehend the principle encounters difficulty in comprehending a branch. This is at the bottom of the misunderstanding of Sayyed Şāhib. The principle of prayer is that there is a mutually attractive relationship between a pious servant and his Lord. To begin with, the mercy (*Raḥmāniyyat*) of God Almighty draws a servant to itself. Then through his sincerity the servant approaches close to God Almighty and in prayer that relationship, when it arrives at a certain stage, manifests its wonderful qualities. When a servant

being confronted with a great difficulty leans towards God Almighty with perfect certainty, perfect hope, perfect love, perfect fidelity and perfect resolve, and becoming extremely alert and tearing aside the veils of heedlessness advances far into the fields of the discarding of self, he beholds in front of him the court of the Divine and that He has no associate. Then his soul prostrates itself at that threshold and the power of attraction that is invested in him draws the bounty of God Almighty towards itself. Then God, the Glorious, addresses Himself towards fulfilling the purpose of the supplication and casts the effect of prayer on all those preliminary means which give rise to the means that are necessary for the achievement of the purpose of the prayer. For instance, if the prayer is for rain then on its acceptance the natural means that are needed for rain are created by the effect of the prayer. If the prayer is for famine the All-Powerful One creates the contrary means.

It has been proved to the satisfaction of those who have frequent experience of visions that in the prayer of a perfect person a power of fashioning is created. That is to say, by the command of God the prayer exercises control in the lower and higher world and turns the elements and heavenly bodies and the hearts of people to the direction that is desired. There are many instances of this in the holy Books of God Almighty.

The Effect of Prayer is Greater than the Effect of Fire

Some types of miracles are in reality the acceptance of prayer. The source of thousands of miracles that were manifested by the Prophets and the wonders that have been exhibited throughout by the saints was prayer, and

it is through the effect of **prayer** that extraordinary events display the power of the All-Powerful. Are you aware what was the wonderful event that happened in the deserts of **Arabia**, that hundreds of thousands of the dead came alive within a few days, and those who had been corrupted through generations took on Divine colour, and the blind began to see, and the tongues of the dumb began to flow with Divine insights, and such a revolution took place in the world which no eye had seen and no ear had heard before? **It was the prayers during dark nights of one who had been wholly lost in God which created an uproar in the world** and manifested such wonders as had appeared impossible in the case of that unlearned helpless one.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ وَبَارِكْ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ بَعْدَ هَمِّهِ وَغَمِّهِ وَحُزْنِهِ لِهَذِهِ
الْأُمَّةِ وَأَنْزِلْ عَلَيْهِ أَنْوَارَ رَحْمَتِكَ إِلَى الْآبِدِ⁵³

I have experience that the effect of prayers is greater than the effect of fire and water. Indeed in the systems of natural means **nothing has greater effect than prayer.**

Physical and Spiritual Means are Not Outside Determination

If a question is raised that some prayers are not heard and no effect of theirs becomes visible, I would say that the same is the case with medical remedies. Have medicines shut the door of death, or is it not possible for them to fail of their purpose? Yet, despite this, can anyone deny their effect? It is true that determination comprehends

⁵³ O Allāh send down blessings and peace on him and on his people proportionate to the amount of his suffering and sorrow for the sake of the *Ummah* and send down upon him the light of Thy mercy forever. [Publisher]

everything, but determination has not wasted or disgraced knowledge, nor has it rendered means unreliable. Careful consideration would show that physical and **spiritual means** are not outside determination. For instance, if the fate of a patient should be good, the means of a proper remedy become available and the body becomes ready to take advantage of them. In such a case, the remedy becomes most effective. The same is the case with **prayer**. All means and conditions for the acceptance of prayer come together where the Divine design is of acceptance. God Almighty has tied together His physical and spiritual systems in the same chain of causes and effects. It is a great mistake on the part of Sayyed Şāhib that he acknowledges the physical system but denies the spiritual system.

I deem it necessary to add that if Sayyed Şāhib does not repent of his wrong assumption and should require proof of the acceptance of prayer, **I have been commissioned by God to dispel such misconceptions. I promise that I shall inform Sayyed Şāhib in advance of the acceptance of some of my prayers** and will also publish the fact, provided Sayyed Şāhib promises that on my claim being established he will repent of his wrong assumption.

Must All Prayers be Accepted?

Sayyed Şāhib says that in the Holy Qur'ān God Almighty has promised acceptance of all prayers while the fact is that some prayers are not accepted. This is a misunderstanding on his part and the verse:

⁵⁴ اٰذْعُوْنِيْ اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

⁵⁴ ‘Pray unto Me, I will answer your prayer.’—Al-Mu’min, 40:61
[Publisher]

does not help his purpose. The prayer that is prescribed in this verse as a command is not any ordinary prayer, but is the worship that has been made obligatory. Not all prayers are obligatory. At some places God, the Glorious, has praised those who are steadfast and at a time of trial commit themselves entirely to God. In this verse, prayer has not only been commanded but the verse goes on to describe it as worship and in case of disobedience warns of the torment of hell. It is obvious that in the case of other prayers this warning is not added. Indeed, in some cases Prophets were admonished in respect of their prayers. The verse:

رَفِئَتْ أَعْظَمَكَ أَنْ تَكُونَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِينَ⁵⁵

is an instance. This shows that if every prayer had been worship Noah would not have been rebuked about his prayer. In some situations, Prophets and saints have considered it disrespectful to supplicate and the righteous have followed the dictate of their hearts in respect of such prayers; that is to say, if at a time of distress the heart suggested prayer they turned to prayer and if the heart suggested steadfastness, they were steadfast and turned away from prayer. Besides, God has not promised acceptance of prayer in all cases, but has clearly said that He would accept if He so wills and would reject if He so wills. This is clearly indicated in the verse:

بَلْ رِجَاءُ تَدْعُونَ فَيَكْشِفُ مَا تَدْعُونَ لِئَوَّلِ شَاءِ⁵⁶
(Sūrah An‘ām, Part Number 7)

⁵⁵ ‘I advise thee lest thou become *one* of the ignorant.’—Hūd, 11:47
[Publisher]

⁵⁶ ‘Nay, but on Him alone will you call; then will He remove that which you call on Him *to remove*, if He please....’—Al-An‘ām, 6:42
[Publisher]

Conditions of Acceptance of Prayer

Even if we were to concede that the phrase '*Call Me*' means prayer, we would have to affirm that by prayer is meant such prayer as complies with all required conditions and that is not within the power of man unless he is helped by God. Humility alone is not enough for prayer, but righteousness, purity, truthfulness, perfect certainty, perfect love and perfect attention are all needed. It is also necessary that the object prayed for should not be opposed to the Divine design for the welfare in this world and in the hereafter of the suppliant, or of the one on whose behalf supplication is made. Very often, despite all other conditions being fulfilled, the object for which supplication is made is opposed to the Divine design and there is no good in its fulfilment. For instance, if a child should cry that his mother should hand over to him a burning brand, or a serpent, or should feed him a poison, which appears agreeable, the mother would not comply with his wish. Were she to do so, and though the child might escape with his life some limb of his should become useless, then arriving at years of discretion the child would have a grievance against his foolish mother. There are many other conditions in the absence of which prayer does not deserve that name and so long as a prayer is not inspired by full spirituality and there is not a close connection between him who supplicates and him on whose behalf supplication is made, there is little hope of the acceptance of prayer. Unless there is Divine willingness for the acceptance of prayer all these conditions are not fulfilled and full attention remains lacking.

Sayyed Şāhib acknowledges that the good fortune of the hereafter and its bounties and delights and comforts which constitute salvation, are the result of faith and

sincere prayers. That being so, Sayyed Ṣāhib would be compelled to acknowledge that a believer's prayers have effect and become the cause of the removal of calamities and the achievement of objectives. If that were not so, then how would they be of help on the Judgement Day? If prayer is truly a vain thing and cannot be the cause of removal of any calamity in this life, then how will it become a cause for their removal on the Judgement Day?

If our prayers truly possess the effect of safeguarding us against calamities then that effect should be manifested in this world also, so that our faith and hope might be fostered and we should pray more earnestly for our salvation in the hereafter. But if prayer amounts to nothing and that which is written is bound to happen, then as, according to Sayyed Ṣāhib, prayer is vain for the calamities of this world, it will be vain for the hereafter also and no hope could be placed in it.

[Barakāt-ud-Du'ā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 5-14]

To Supplicate is Human and to Respond is Divine

When a child being driven by hunger cries for milk, then milk is generated in the mother's breasts. The child does not know what prayer is, but his cries draw the milk. This is a universal experience. Sometimes when the mother does not perceive the presence of milk in her breasts, the child's cries help to draw it. Then can our cries before God Almighty draw nothing? They certainly draw everything. But those sightless ones, who parade themselves as scholars and philosophers, cannot see it. If a person were to reflect on the philosophy of prayer, keeping in mind the connection and relationship which a child has with its mother, he would find it easy to understand.

The second type of mercy comes into operation after supplication. Go on asking and you will go on receiving.

أَدْعُونِي أَجِبْكُمْ⁵⁷

is not mere verbiage, but is a characteristic of human nature. To supplicate is human to respond is Divine. He who does not understand and does not believe is false. The illustration of the child that I have set forth expounds the philosophy of prayer in an excellent way.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 129-130]

It is at a time of trial that the wonderful and rare qualities and effects of prayer are manifested. **The truth is that our God is recognized only through prayers.**

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, p. 201]

Etiquette of Prayer

Prayer is a wonderful thing. It is a pity that those who pray are not aware of the true manner of prayer, nor are they acquainted with the ways of the acceptance of prayer. The truth is that the very reality of prayer has become strange. There are some who deny the effectiveness of prayer altogether. There are others who do not deny it, but as their prayers are not accepted on account of their lack of knowledge of the manner of prayer and are not prayers in the true sense, their condition is worse than that of those who deny the effectiveness of prayer. Their practical condition has pushed many others to the verge of atheism.

The first condition for prayer is that a supplicant should not get tired and become a prey to despair that nothing

⁵⁷ ‘Pray unto Me, I will answer your prayer.’—Al-Mu’min, 40:61
[Publisher]

will happen. Sometimes it is seen that a prayer is carried on till it is about to be accepted and then the supplicant gets tired and the result is failure and frustration. Frustration results in the denial and effectiveness of prayer and gradually culminates in the denial of God. It is said if there is God Who accepts prayer why have not those prayers been accepted which were offered over a long period? If those who think thus and stumble were to reflect upon their lack of perseverance, they would come to know that all their frustration is the result of their own haste and impatience which generated an ill concept of the powers of God and resulted in despair. So one should never get tired.

Be Sincere and Determined

Praying is like the sowing of a seed by a farmer. Apparently he buries the good seed in the soil and who can expect at that time that the grain of seed will grow up in the form of a good tree and bear fruit? Outsiders and even the cultivator himself cannot see that the grain is assuming the form of a plant inside the earth. But the reality is that within a few days the grain undergoes a change and begins to assume the shape of a plant till its shoot emerges from the earth and becomes visible to everyone. From the moment when the grain was placed in the earth it had started its preparation to become a plant, but an eye that can only perceive the visible was not aware of it till its shoot emerged from the earth and became visible. An ignorant child cannot understand at that stage that it will bear fruit only at its due time. He desires to see it bearing fruit immediately, but an intelligent cultivator will know what is the time of its bearing fruit. He looks after it steadfastly and nurtures it till the

time comes when it bears fruit and which also ripens.

The same is the case with prayer, which is nurtured in the same way and brings forth fruit. Those who are in haste get tired quickly and give up, and those who are steadfast persevere and arrive at their objective. It is true that there are many stages in prayer, ignorance of which deprives the supplicants of the fruits of their prayers. They are in a hurry and cannot wait, whereas there is progression in the works of the Almighty. It never happens that a man marries today and a child is born to him next morning. Though God is All-Powerful and can do whatever He wills, yet compliance with the law and the system that He has appointed is necessary. In the first stages of child-bearing nothing is known, like the nurture of vegetation. For four months there is no certainty. Then a movement begins to be felt and after the expiry of the full period the child is born after great travail. The birth of the child is also gives a new life to the mother. It is difficult for a man to form a concept of the troubles and travails which a woman has to endure during her pregnancy, but it is true that the coming of a child is a new life for the mother. She has to accept death so as to have the joy of bearing a child. In the same way, it is necessary for a supplicant that he should discard haste and endure all troubles and should never imagine that prayer is not accepted. At last the time arrives for the result of the prayer to be manifested; the child which is the objective is born.

A prayer should be carried on to the limit until it produces a result. You will have observed that a piece of cloth is placed under a burning glass and the rays of the sun concentrate upon it and their heat arrives at the

degree which sets the cloth on fire. In the same way, it is necessary that a prayer should be carried on to a stage where it should develop the power of burning up failures and frustrations and to fulfil the desired purpose.

پیدا است ندامت اگر که بلند است جنابت

One has to be occupied with prayer for a long time and then God Almighty manifests the result. It is my experience, which is borne out by the experience of the righteous in the past, that if there is silence for a long time, there is hope of success, but if there is a quick reply the purpose is not likely to be achieved. When a beggar goes to someone and begs with humility and earnestness and does not move from his place, even after he is rebuked, and continues his supplication, then in the end the person supplicated is moved and bestows something on the beggar despite his miserliness. Then should not a supplicant have at least so much steadfastness as an ordinary beggar? When God Almighty Who is Benevolent and possesses Majesty sees that His humble servant has been prostrate at His threshold for a long time, He does not lead him to a bad end. If a pregnant woman should become impatient after four or five months and should take some abortive medicine, the child would not be born, but she herself would be involved in despair. In the same way, he who is in a hurry before the due time only suffers loss and puts his faith in danger. In this condition some people become atheists. There was a carpenter in our village whose wife fell ill and then died. He said that if there had been a God, his multiple prayers would have been accepted and his wife would not have died. In this way he became an atheist.

If a righteous person practices fidelity and sincerity, his faith is fostered and he achieves his purpose. The riches of this world have no value in the estimation of God Almighty. He can do everything in a single moment. Have you not seen that He bestowed sovereignty on a people who were entirely unknown and made great kingdoms obedient to them and made kings out of slaves? If a person is righteous and becomes wholly God's, he would lead an excellent life, but the condition is that he should be sincere and possess resolve. His heart should never be shaken and there should be no showing off and *shirk* in it. What was there in Abraham which made him the father of his people and the father of those who are devoted to God, and God Almighty bestowed numberless great blessings on him? It was his righteousness and his sincerity. Abraham had offered a prayer that a Prophet should appear in Arabia from among his progeny. Was it accepted at once? For a long time after Abraham no one paid any attention to that prayer, yet it was fulfilled in the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) and how grand was its fulfilment.

[Al-Hakm, vol. 7, Number. 8, 28 February 1903, pp. 1-3]

Two Ways of Acceptance of Prayer

It should be remembered that the acceptance of prayer is in two ways; one as a trial and the other as exaltation. As a trial sometimes the prayer of sinners and disobedient ones and even disbelievers is accepted, but such acceptance does not indicate a real acceptance, it is by way of trial. The condition of acceptance of prayer by way of

exaltation is that the supplicant should be one of the elect of God Almighty and the lights and signs of his being one of the elect should appear in him in all directions. God Almighty does not accept the prayer, as a true acceptance, of the disobedient ones. He accepts the prayer only of those who in His estimation are righteous and obedient to Him. The distinction between the two acceptances is that in the acceptance of the prayer which is as a trial, there is no condition that the supplicant should be righteous and a friend of God, nor is it necessary that on accepting such prayer God Almighty should intimate the acceptance through a special communication. Nor are those prayers of such a high degree the acceptance of which is a wonderful and extraordinary event. Those prayers that are accepted by way of exaltation have the following signs:

First, that the supplicant is righteous and truthful and a perfect individual.

Second, that he is informed of the acceptance of his prayer through the word of God.

Third, most of these prayers are of a high degree and relate to great affairs, the acceptance of which shows that it is not the work or planning of man, but is a special sample of Divine power which is manifested in the case of select servants.

Fourth, the prayers by way of trial are accepted rarely, but the prayers by way of exaltation are accepted in large numbers. Very often a supplicant by way of exaltation is involved in such difficulties that if any other person had been involved in them, he would have seen no way out of

them except through suicide. It happens that when those who worship the world and are far away from God Almighty are involved in great grief, and sorrows, and diseases, and disorders and trials from which there is no escape, they, on account of the weakness of their faith and their despair of God Almighty, take poison or jump into a well or kill themselves with a weapon. On such difficult occasions, the person who enjoys exaltation is helped by God Almighty in a wonderful manner on account of the strength of his faith and his special relationship with God. The favour of God takes hold of his hand in a wonderful manner so that the heart of one who is aware of these mysteries testifies involuntarily that the person concerned enjoys the support of God.

Fifth, a supplicant by way of exaltation is the recipient of Divine favours and God Almighty becomes his Guardian in all matters and the light of the love of God and the signs of acceptance by God and of spiritual delight and favours are manifested in his countenance as is said by God, the Glorious:

تَعْرِفُ فِي وُجُوهِهِمْ نَضْرَةَ النَّعِيمِ⁵⁸

and:

أَلَّا رَأَوْا يَأْتِيَهُمْ اللَّهُ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ⁵⁹

[Taṣdīq-un-Nabī, pp. 43-45 OR Maktūbāt-e-Aḥmadiyya, vol. III, pp. 75-77].

⁵⁸ 'Thou wilt find in their faces the freshness of bliss.'—Al-Taṭfīf, 83:25 [Publisher]

⁵⁹ 'Behold! the friends of Allāh shall certainly have no fear nor shall they grieve.'—Yūnus, 10:63 [Publisher]

What is Prayer?

When our soul in search for something, extends its hand with great earnestness and weeping towards the Fountainhead of grace, and, finding itself helpless, seeks light from somewhere through its reflection, this condition too is like a condition of prayer. All wisdoms have been manifested through such prayer and the key of every house of knowledge is prayer. No knowledge or insight is manifested without it. **Our thinking, our reflection and our search for the hidden objective are all parts of prayer.** The only difference is that the **prayer of those who possess insight** depends upon the manners of insight, and their soul recognizing the Fountainhead of grace extends its hand towards it with insight. The prayer of veiled ones is an effort which is manifested in reflection and thinking and the search for means. Those people who have not a connection of insight with God Almighty, nor do they believe in it, they too seek through reflection and thinking that some way of success might be indicated to their heart from the unseen, and a supplicant possessing insight also desires that God may open the way of success to him, but the veiled one who has no relationship with God Almighty does not know the Fountainhead of grace. He too, like one possessing insight, seeks help from another quarter and reflects on the means of obtaining such help, but a person possessing insight has an eye on the Fountainhead. The other one walks in darkness and does not know that whatever strikes the heart after reflection and cogitation is also from God Almighty, **Who, treating the anxiety of the anxious one as a supplication,** casts the necessary knowledge into the heart of one who cogitates. The point of wisdom and understanding that enters the heart through reflection also comes from

God and, though the person himself may not realize it, yet God Almighty knows that he is supplicating Him. In the end he is bestowed his object by God. This method of seeing light, if it is pursued with insight and with the recognition of the true Guide, is the prayer of a person of understanding; but if light is sought from an unknown source, only through reflection and cogitation without fixing one's gaze on the True Illuminer, it is only veiled prayer....

Prayer and Planning are Two Natural Demands

As the relationship between planning and prayer is proved by the law of nature, it is also proved by the testimony of the book of nature. It is often observed that as human temperaments at a time of distress incline towards planning and remedies, in the same way they incline by natural eagerness towards prayer and almsgiving and charity.... This is a spiritual argument that the inner law of man has, from the beginning, directed all peoples that they should not separate prayer from means and planning, **but should search for plans with prayer**. In short, prayer and planning are two natural demands of human nature which ever since the creation of man, have been the servants of human nature like two real brothers. Planning is the necessary consequence of prayer and prayer incites towards planning. The good fortune of man consists in this, that before entering upon planning he should seek help through prayer from the Fountainhead of grace so that being granted light from this ever-flowing spring good plans should be made available to him.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 230-232]

He who supplicates God at the time of difficulty and

distress and seeks the resolution of his difficulties from Him achieves satisfaction and **true prosperity** from God Almighty provided he carries his supplication to its limit. Even if he does not achieve the purpose of his supplication, he is bestowed some other kind of satisfaction and contentment by God Almighty and does not experience frustration. In addition, his faith is strengthened and his certainty increases. But the one who in his supplication does not turn towards God Almighty remains blind all the time and dies blind....

He who supplicates with the sincerity of his soul is never truly frustrated. That prosperity which cannot be achieved through riches and authority and health, but which is in the hand of God and He bestows it in whatever shape He wills, is bestowed through perfect prayer. If God Almighty so wills, a **sincere and righteous person** in the midst of his distress achieves such delight after supplication which an emperor cannot enjoy on the imperial throne. This is true success which is bestowed in the end on those who pray.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 237]

Divine Attention is Drawn through Prayer

Is it not a satisfactory proof that from the beginning it has been the spiritual Divine law that, in consequence of prayer, Divine attention is attracted and satisfaction and contentment and true prosperity are bestowed? If in seeking an objective we are not in error, we achieve that objective, but if we are in error in our supplication, like the misguided child who demands from its mother a serpent or a burning brand, God Almighty bestows upon us that which is better for us. In either case, He fosters our faith, and for true supplication we are bestowed

knowledge by God Almighty in advance and our certainty increases as if we have seen God. There is a relationship between **prayer and acceptance** which has existed ever since man was created. When God Almighty addresses Himself towards the doing of a thing it is His way that some **sincere servant** of His occupies himself with prayer in restlessness, pain and distress, and devotes the whole of his resolve and attention towards the accomplishment of that objective. Then the prayers of the **mortal man** draw Divine grace from heaven and God Almighty creates such new means through which the purpose is achieved.

Though such prayer is apparently offered by man, yet in truth that person is **wholly lost in God** and at the time of supplication he arrives in the presence of the One and Glorious with such a stamp of being lost in God that at that time his hand becomes the hand of God Almighty. **Such is the prayer** through which God is recognized and the existence of that Glorious One becomes known Who is hidden in thousands of veils.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 238-239]

A foolish one thinks that prayer is a vain and useless thing, but he does not know that it is prayer in consequence of which God, the Glorious, manifests Himself to His seekers and conveys to their hearts the revelation: ***"I am the All-Powerful One."*** Everyone who is hungry and thirsty for certainty should remember that for the seeker of spiritual light in this world, prayer is the only means which bestows certainty with regard to the existence of God Almighty and removes all doubts and suspicions.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 239-240]

Four Reasons for Obligatory Prayers

It is also worthy of note that the prayer which has been made obligatory upon Muslims in the Holy Word of God has been prescribed for four reasons. (1) The first is, so that by turning to God Almighty at every time and in every condition, one should be firmly established on the Unity of God, inasmuch as supplicating Him is to acknowledge that **God alone bestows one's objective upon one**. (2) The second is, that **faith might be strengthened** by the acceptance of prayer and the achievement of the objective. (3) The third is, that if Divine favour is bestowed in any other way, **knowledge and wisdom might be increased**. (4) The fourth is, that if one is informed of the acceptance of prayer through a vision or revelation which is fulfilled, the **understanding of the Divine might be promoted** and understanding might grow into **certainty** and certainty into **love** and through love there might be **deliverance** from every sin and a **cutting asunder** from everything beside God, which is the fruit of **true salvation**.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 242]

Acceptance of Prayer is a True Means of God's Recognition

As we have stated already, Muslims have been urged in *Sūrah Fātiḥah* to occupy themselves with prayer and have been taught the prayer:

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ⁶⁰

And it has been made obligatory that this prayer is to be offered on five occasions every day. It would therefore be a great mistake to deny the spirituality of prayer. The

⁶⁰ 'Guide us in the right path.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6 [Publisher]

verdict of the Holy Qur'ān is that prayer comprises a spirituality and that in consequence of prayer a grace descends which bestows the fruit of success **in diverse forms**.

Thus every just person can understand that as despite the admission of determination, it is the way of Allāh that in hundreds of matters effort and endeavour produce results, in the same way, the effort that is put forth in the form of prayer is not wasted. At one place in the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty has appointed it as a sign of His recognition that He hears the supplication of distressed ones, as it is said:

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ⁶¹

As God Almighty has appointed the acceptance of **prayer** as a sign of His existence, how can any sensible person imagine that prayer does not result in visible signs of acceptance and that it is only a formal matter which has no spirituality in it? I consider that no one having true faith can be guilty of such disrespect. God, the Glorious, says that as by the contemplation of the creation of heaven and earth, the true God is recognized; in the same way, by observing the acceptance of prayer, faith in God Almighty is created. Then if there is no spirituality in prayer and no obvious grace truly and in fact descends in consequence of prayer, how can prayer be such a means of the recognition of God Almighty as are heaven and earth and heavenly bodies? Indeed the Holy Qur'ān shows that the best means of the recognition of God is prayer and that it is only through prayer that the complete and perfect understanding of the existence of God and

⁶¹ 'Or, Who answers the distressed person when he calls upon Him?.'—Al-Naml, 27:63 [Publisher]

His perfect attributes is obtained and that it cannot be obtained in any other way. It is prayer which, like a flash of lightning, pulls a person out of the pit of darkness and brings him into the open atmosphere of light and makes him stand before God Almighty. Through prayer thousands of the wicked are reformed and thousands of the corrupt are purified.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulh, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 259-260]

Divine Determination and Acceptance of Prayers

When the grace of God Almighty approaches, He provides the means of the acceptance of prayer, and a melting and a burning is created in the heart, but when it is not the time for the acceptance of prayer a sense of satisfaction and a turning to God are not generated in the heart. Whatever effort one might make one's mind pays no attention. The reason is that sometimes God Almighty accepts prayer and sometimes desires to enforce His determination. For this reason, till I see the signs of Divine command I have little hope of acceptance of prayer and reconcile myself to His determination with greater pleasure than I derive from the acceptance of prayer inasmuch as the fruits and blessings of being pleased with His determination are much greater.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 460]

It is a truth that he who does not do good deeds for the acceptance of his prayer does not pray, but tries God Almighty. Therefore, before making supplication it is necessary to put forth every effort and that is the meaning of this prayer. First a supplicant should check up on his beliefs and actions for it is the way of God Almighty that reform comes in the shape of means which he makes available in some form or another.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 124]

Prayer is a Kind of Death

There is a proverb in Punjābī: “He who asks dies a death, so die and then ask.” The meaning is that it is an afflicted one who prays and that prayer is a form of death. If a person drinks a drop of water and claims that his great thirst has been slaked, he utters a falsehood. His claim would be established if he were to drink a bowl full of water. When prayer is offered in great tribulation so that the soul melts and flows at the threshold of the Divine, that is true prayer and it is God’s way that when such a prayer is offered, He accepts it or responds to it in some other manner.

[Malfūzāt, vol. IV, p. 340]

When you stand up in prayer, you should know it for certain that your God has the power to do all that He wills. Then your prayer will be accepted and you will behold the wonders of God’s power that we have beheld. Our testimony is based on seeing and is not a mere tale. How should the supplication of a person be accepted and how should he have the courage to pray at the time of great difficulties when according to him he is opposed by the law of nature, unless he believes that God has power over everything? You should not be like that. Your God is One Who has suspended numberless stars without any support and Who has created heaven and earth from nothing. Then would you think so ill of Him as to imagine that your objective is beyond His power? Such thinking will frustrate you. Our God possesses numberless wonders, but only those observe them who become wholly His with sincerity and fidelity. He does not disclose His wonders to those who do not believe in His powers and are not faithful to Him.

[Kashfī Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 19, p.21]

Three Conditions for Acceptance of Prayer

So far as God Almighty has bestowed upon me the knowledge of prayer I conceive that there are three conditions for the acceptance of prayer.

First, a supplicant should be perfectly righteous, for only that one is acceptable to God Almighty who makes righteousness his habit and adheres firmly to all the paths of righteousness and who is trustworthy and pious and true in his promises and is filled with the personal love of God.

Secondly, his resolve and attention should be so firm and strong that he should be ready to lay down his own life for the revival of another and should be ready to enter himself into the grave to pull another out of it. His accepted servants are dearer to God Almighty than an only child, who is also handsome, is dear to its mother. When God, the Merciful and Benevolent, sees that one who is accepted of Him and is true to Him has, for the sake of saving the life of another, subjected himself to spiritual labours and disciplines to a degree that his own life is in danger, He finds it disagreeable that He should let him perish in that condition. Then for his sake He forgives the sin in respect of which the other person had been seized. If he is afflicted with a fatal disease or is in the grip of some other calamity, then by His power He creates means for his deliverance. Very often it happens that He is determined to ruin or destroy a person, but through the latter's good luck someone who has a good standing before God intervenes with his earnest supplications so that the record that had been prepared and completed for his chastisement has to be destroyed, for

the matter now is transferred from being concerned with a stranger to being concerned with a friend. It cannot happen that God would put His friend to trouble.

Thirdly, there is a condition which is more difficult to comply with than all other conditions, inasmuch as compliance with it is not in the hands of those who are accepted of God, but is in the hands of the person who desires to have a supplication made on his behalf. That condition is that he should be desirous of supplication being made for him with the utmost sincerity and in perfect trust and certainty and perfect goodwill and submission. He should decide in his heart that even if the supplication is not accepted this would not affect his trust and goodwill. His request for supplication should not be as a trial but should be made in full trust. He should fall most humbly at the door of the person from whom he is seeking supplication and, so far as it is possible for him, he should establish a close relationship with him by spending his money and rendering service and every obedience whereby he should enter his heart. Along with all this he should think well of him and should regard him as possessing righteousness of the highest degree and should regard it as disbelief to entertain a single thought inconsistent with his holy estate. He should prove his full belief in him through every kind of sacrifice. He should not regard any other in the world as his equal and should be devoted to him so much as to be ready to lay down his life and his property and his honour for him and should neither utter nor let his heart entertain anything derogatory of him from any point of view. He should establish it to his satisfaction that he believes fully in him and is his follower. With all this, he should wait with patience and even if he should be

frustrated fifty times in achieving his objective, he should not let his belief and goodwill be affected in any manner.

Such people have very delicate sensibilities and they can conclude from a person's countenance the degree of his sincerity. They are tender-hearted, yet they are self-sufficient. They have no regard for any arrogant, selfish and hypocritical person. Only those people can derive any benefit from them who obey them to a degree where they are ready to lay down their lives for them. A person who thinks ill of them at every step and entertains objections in his heart and lacks full love and goodwill derives no benefit from them and only ruins himself.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 226-228]

God Treats Favourites as Friends

It is true that most of the prayers of those who are accepted of God are accepted. Indeed, their great miracle is the acceptance of their prayers. When their hearts are sorely distressed at a time of misfortune and in their distress they turn to God, at that time their hand becomes, as it were, the hand of God. God is a hidden treasure. Through His perfect favourites He displays His countenance. God's signs are displayed when His favourites are persecuted. When they are persecuted to the extreme that is an indication that the sign of God is near and indeed it is at the door. No one loves his son so much as God loves those who become wholly His. He displays His wonders for them and manifests such power on their behalf as if a sleeping tiger wakes up. God is hidden and these are the people who make Him manifest. He is behind a thousand veils and these are the people who display His countenance.

But it needs to be remembered that it is a wrong notion that every prayer of those who are God's favourites is accepted. The truth is that the dealing of God Almighty with them is like that of a friend; sometimes He accepts their prayers and sometimes He imposes His will upon them. That is what happens in friendship. At one time, a friend accepts what his friend proposes and acts accordingly, and at another time makes him accept what he himself wishes. At one place in the Holy Qur'ān God promises acceptance of the prayers of believers saying:

أَدْعُونِي أَجْتَبْ لَكُمْ⁶²

That is, Pray to Me, I shall accept your prayer.

And at another place instructs them to accept His determination with pleasure. It is said:

وَلَتَجِدَنَّ كُمْ يَسْتَفِئُونَ مِنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ وَ
الْثَّمَرَاتِ ۚ وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا إِنَّا لِلَّهِ
وَلَا إِلَٰهَ إِلَّا هُوَ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ صِرَاطٌ عَلِيمٌ⁶³

By reading both these verses together, one would know what is the way of Allāh in respect of prayers and what is the relationship between the Lord and a servant.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 20-21]

⁶² Al-Mu'min, 40:61 [Publisher]

⁶³ 'And We will try you with something of fear and hunger, and loss of wealth and lives, and fruits; but give glad tidings to the patient, who, when a misfortune overtakes them, say: Surely, to Allāh we belong and to Him shall we return.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:156–157 [Publisher]

Why even the Prayers of Perfect People are not Always Accepted

Some ignorant people ask why some of the prayers of those who are perfect are not accepted. The answer is that God Almighty has kept under His own control the manifestation of their beauty. When this great manifestation takes place and their beauty shines forth in respect of any matter, then the particles of the universe are drawn to it and the impossible happens which, in other words, is called a **miracle**. But this spiritual manifestation does not appear always and at every place and depends upon external elements. This is because, as God is Self-Sufficient, He has invested His elect also with the quality of self-sufficiency. Like God, they are also self-sufficient and till someone puts in motion their mercy with full humility and sincerity that quality of theirs is not activated. These people possess the quality of mercy to a greater degree than the rest of the world, but it is a matter of wonder that it is not within their own power to activate it. They often wish that it should be manifested, but it is not manifested without the Divine will. They have no regard for those who deny them and for the hypocrites and for the weak in faith and consider them like dead insects. Their self-sufficiency is of the type which is possessed by a beloved person who conceals his face behind a beautiful veil. One aspect of this self-sufficiency is that when a wicked person thinks ill of them, they often foster this ill-thinking by disregarding them completely, for they take on Divine qualities, as God Almighty has said:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا⁶⁴

When God desires that they should display a miracle, He creates an eagerness in their hearts and they become restless and disturbed for the achievement of a particular purpose. Then they put aside the veil of self-sufficiency and their beauty, which is not visible to anyone except God Almighty, is disclosed to the angels of heaven and to every particle. The removal of their veil means that with their perfect sincerity and fidelity, and with the spiritual beauty on account of which they have become the beloved of God, they turn to God in such an extraordinary manner and such a condition of welcoming God is produced in their hearts which draws the extraordinary mercy of God Almighty to itself and along with it every particle of this universe is drawn to them, and the heat of their loving warmth collects in heaven and discloses its countenance to the angels like the clouds. Their pains, which have the quality of thunder in them, create a turmoil in heaven. Then, by the power of God Almighty, those qualities are created which send down the rain of achieving the mercy that they desire. When their spirituality with its full yearning attends to the resolution of any difficulty, it draws God's attention to itself, inasmuch as they are counted among those who are beloved of God on account of the personal love that they entertain for God. Then everything which is under the command of God Almighty becomes eager for their help and Divine mercy gets ready for a new creation in order to fulfil their purpose, and those matters are manifested which appear impossible to the worldly and which are unknown to the

⁶⁴ 'In their hearts was a disease, and Allāh has increased their disease to them.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:11 [Publisher]

pursuers of lower knowledge. These people cannot be called God, but their relationship of love and closeness to God is so sincere and faithful that God appears to descend into them and the Divine Spirit is breathed into them as it was breathed into Adam. They are not God, but their relationship to God is such as a piece of iron has to fire when it is heated in the fire to such a degree that it assumes the colour of the fire.

When this happens, all that is under the command of God Almighty comes under their command, and the stars of heaven, the sun and the moon, the oceans, air and fire hear their voice and recognize them and serve them. Everything loves them naturally and is drawn to them like a true lover, except the wicked who are the reflections of Satan. Worldly love is ill-omened. It arises on one side and dies on the other, and also it is based upon beauty that is subject to decline and there are few people who come under its influence. But how wonderful is that spiritual beauty which is generated in a person by good behaviour, purity, righteousness and, after the manifestation of Divine love. It possesses a universal attraction, and draws eager hearts to itself as honey draws ants and not only men but also every particle of the universe is affected by its attraction. A person who has true love for God Almighty is Joseph for whom every particle of this universe is like Zulaikhā; but whose beauty has not yet been revealed to the world for this world cannot endure it. God Almighty says in His Holy Book, the Qur'ān, that the light of the believers is displayed in their countenances and a believer is recognized by the beauty, the name of which in other words is light.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 221-224]

Why Acceptance of Supplications is sometimes Delayed

Sometimes it happens that a seeker supplicates with great yearning and pain, but he observes that the result of his prayers is being postponed and delayed. What is the reason? In this connection it is necessary to remember that there is a gradualness in the affairs of the world. How many stages has a child to pass through before becoming a full grown person? How much time is taken by a seed to become a tree? In the same way, Divine matters are also completed gradually. There is also this Divine purpose in such a delay that the supplicant should become confirmed in his resolve and courage and his understanding should be strengthened. To the degree to which a person desires to acquire high rank and gradations to that degree he is called upon to work hard and to wait. Perseverance and resolve are such excellent qualities that without them a person cannot traverse the stages of success. It is necessary, therefore, that he should first pass through difficulties. That is why it is said:

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا⁶⁵

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 202-203]

Sometimes it happens that a person supplicates for something, but his supplication is the result of his ignorance and stupidity. He desires something from God Almighty which under no circumstances can be useful or beneficial for him. In such a case, God Almighty does not reject his prayer, but fulfills it in some other form. For instance, a cultivator who needs a bullock for his

⁶⁵ ‘Aye, surely there is ease after hardship.’—Al-Inshirāh, 94:7
[Publisher]

plough goes to a ruler and asks him for a camel. The ruler knows that a bullock would be useful for him and he directs that he should be given a bullock. If that person should say that his request has not been granted, it would be foolish on his part, for if he were to reflect, that which happened was the best for him. In the same way, if a child beholding red burning brands should ask its mother for them, would a kind and compassionate mother hand them over to it? Thus, sometimes, circumstances arise in connection with the acceptance of prayer that people who are impatient and lack goodwill become the cause of the rejection of their prayer.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. IV, p. 435]

Do not be Impatient and Hasty

During the interval between a supplication and its acceptance one is often subjected to trial after trial, some of which are back-breaking. A persevering and good-natured supplicant smells the perfume of the favours of his Lord in these trials and difficulties and his intelligence informs him that they will be followed by help. One aspect of these trials is that they foster eagerness for prayer. The greater the distress of the supplicant, the more his soul will be melted. This is one of the factors in the acceptance of prayer. So one should not lose heart and should not think ill of God through impatience and restlessness. One should never think that one's prayer is not accepted or will not be accepted. Such a notion is a denial of the attribute of God that He accepts prayers.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. IV, pp. 434]

Prayer is very valuable and a person who is given to prayer succeeds in the end. However, it is foolishness and disrespect that a person should seek to avoid the design of God Almighty. For instance, to pray that the

sun should appear in the early part of the night is impertinence. A person who loses hope or desires fulfilment before it is time, suffers loss. For instance, if after ten days of marriage the husband and wife should desire that a child should be born to them, it would be foolish on their part.... In the same way, he who does not allow time for a plant to grow does not let the stage of the ripening of the grain to come....

Muslims in general are ignorant of the principles of prayer, and some of them are such who had the opportunity to pray but as they did not exercise patience and perseverance they were frustrated and adopted the view of Sayyed Aḥmad Khān that prayer is nothing. They fall into such error as they are unaware of the reality of prayer and do not know its effects. Seeing that their hopes of wealth are not fulfilled, they announce that prayer is nothing and they draw away from it. Prayer is a perfect relationship between Providence and servitude. If prayer had no effect, to have recourse to it or not would be equal.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 203-204]

We should have recourse to prayer and should seek forgiveness from God Almighty for He is Self-Sufficient and is not subject to anyone's authority. He has no regard for a person who does not come to Him humbly and in submission. If a person goes to another begging or seeking a favour and puts forward his helplessness and poverty, he would be shown some favour, but if a person comes riding a horse and seeks a favour and threatens that if it is not granted he would have recourse to force, he would only be met by force. To seek a favour from God Almighty obstinately, and to make one's faith conditional, is a great mistake and is likely to prove a

stumbling block. Perseverance and steadfastness in prayer is one thing, but obstinacy is quite another. To say that if one's purpose is not fulfilled one would deny faith or would say this or that is great foolishness and betrays ignorance of the manner of prayer and amounts to *shirk*. Such people are not aware of the philosophy of prayer. Nowhere does the Holy Qur'ān say that God would accept prayer according to the desire of the supplicant. It is true that it is said in the Holy Qur'ān:

أَدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ⁶⁶

but it is also part of our faith, as the Holy Qur'ān too says:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ⁶⁷

If by virtue of:

أَدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ⁶⁸

God accepts your prayer, then by virtue of:

لَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ⁶⁹

He enforces His own will. It is the Benevolence and Generosity of God Almighty that He accepts the supplications of His servants; otherwise, it would not be inconsistent with His Godhead and Providence that He should always enforce His will. When He says:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ⁷⁰

⁶⁶ 'Pray unto Me, I will answer your prayer.'—Al-Mu'min 40:61 [Publisher]

⁶⁷ 'And We will try you with something of fear and hunger.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:156 [Publisher]

⁶⁸ 'Pray unto Me, I will answer your prayer.'—Al-Mu'min 40:61 [Publisher]

⁶⁹ 'We will try you . . .'—Al-Baqarah, 2:156 [Publisher]

⁷⁰ 'And We will try you with something of fear....'—Al-Baqarah,

at that time He desires to enforce His will. There is sometimes fear and sometimes hunger, and sometimes there is decline in wealth, or loss in trade, or poor harvest, or death of children or loss of fruits and harmful results. These are trials from God Almighty. At that time, God desires to display His authority and to enforce His will. At such times a sincere believer accepts the will of God cheerfully and gives it preference and is pleased with it and makes no complaint and thinks no ill. That is why Allāh the Exalted says:

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ⁷¹

And give glad tidings to the steadfast.

God does not say that glad tidings should be conveyed to supplicants, but to those who persevere. It is necessary, therefore, that a supplicant should not lose heart if he meets with failure in his prayers, but should prefer the pleasure of God Almighty with steadfastness and perseverance. The men of God perceive the hopefulness of an enterprise and in that case they supplicate; otherwise, they are content with Divine determination. When they perceive the signs of a calamity, they supplicate, but if they feel that such is Divine determination, they are steadfast, as was the case with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) on the demise of his children, one of whom was Ibrāhīm.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 385-386]

It is my frequent experience that God is so Benevolent and Merciful that when in His Wisdom He does not accept a prayer, He accepts some other prayer in place of

it which is like it. As He has said:

مَا تَنْسَخُ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا
أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ⁷²

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 340]

Be not content with thinking that you pray every day and that the whole of *Ṣalāt* is prayer, for the prayer which issues after understanding and through grace is of a different type altogether. It is something that destroys; it is a fire that melts; it is a magnetic power that draws mercy and it is a death which in the end revives. It is a fierce inundation which finally becomes a vessel. Every frustration is remedied by it and every poison becomes an antidote through it.

God Comes Closer through Prayer

Blessed are the prisoners who supplicate and do not get tired for they shall one day be released; blessed are the blind ones who persevere in their prayers for one day they shall see. Blessed are those who are in the graves and seek the help of God through supplication for one day they shall be taken out of their graves.

Blessed are you who do not get tired in your prayers and your souls melt while you pray, and your eyes shed tears, and a fire is lit in your breasts and you are driven into dark chambers and desolated jungles seeking solitude, and you are rendered restless and mad and unconscious of self, for in the end you will become the recipients of

⁷² 'Whatever Sign We abrogate or cause to be forgotten, We bring one better than that or the like thereof. Dost thou not know that Allāh has the power to do all that He wills?'—Al-Baqarah, 2:107 [Publisher]

grace. The God to Whom we call is very Benevolent, Merciful, Modest, True, Faithful and Compassionate to those who are humble. You should also become faithful and supplicate with full sincerity and loyalty so that He should have mercy on you. Withdraw from the tumult of the world and do not make your faith a matter of personal contentions. Accept defeat for the sake of God so that you might become heirs to great victories. God will show a miracle to those who pray and will bestow extraordinary favour upon those who beg.

Prayer comes from God and returns to Him. Through prayer God comes close to you as your life is close to you. The first bounty of prayer is that it creates a holy change in the supplicant and in consequence of this change God makes a change in His attributes. His attributes are unchangeable, but for a person who has changed himself, He has a special manifestation of which the world does not know, as if He were another God. He does not become another God, but a new manifestation displays Him in a new light. In that special manifestation, He does for His transformed servant, what He does not do for others....

In short, prayer is that sovereign remedy which converts a handful of dust into precious metal. It is the water which washes out inner impurities. With such prayer, the soul melts and, flowing like water, falls at the threshold of the Divine. It stands before God and bows down before Him and prostrates itself before Him. Indeed, the *Ṣalāt* that Islām teaches is a reflection of such prayer.

The standing of the soul in prayer is that it is prepared to endure every misfortune for the sake of God and is eager to carry out His commands, and its bowing down means that, discarding all other loves and relationships, it leans

towards God and becomes His; and its prostration is that, falling at the threshold of God, it loses itself altogether and wipes out its own being. This is the *Ṣalāt* which brings about a meeting between God and the worshipper. The Islāmic law depicts its picture in the shape of the daily *Ṣalāt* so that the physical *Ṣalāt* should urge a worshipper towards the spiritual *Ṣalāt*.

God Almighty has so constituted man that the soul and the body act and react upon each other. When the soul is sad, tears start from the eyes and when the soul is happy the countenance displays cheerfulness so that sometimes the person begins to laugh. In the same way when the body is hurt and feels pain, the soul also partakes of pain, and when the body is pleased with a breeze, the soul is also affected by it. Thus the purpose of physical worship is that on account of the relationship between the soul and body, the soul should be moved towards God and should occupy itself in spiritual bowing and prostration.

[Lecture Siālkot, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 222-224]

To think that seeking help from God is sometimes without result and wondering that the *Raḥmāniyyat* and *Raḥīmiyyat* of God do not manifest themselves in the shape of help, is the result of misunderstanding. God Almighty surely hears the prayers that are offered in sincerity and helps the seekers of help as He considers proper. But sometimes it happens that the prayer and request for help of a person are not inspired by sincerity and lack the humility of the heart, and his spiritual condition is not up to the mark, so that while his lips utter the words of supplication his heart is inattentive or is only making a show. It also happens sometimes that God hears the supplication and bestows whatever He considers proper and most appropriate in His perfect Wisdom,

but the foolish supplicant does not recognize the hidden favour that God does to him and begins to complain on account of his ignorance and unawareness. He does not appreciate the verse:

عَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ
وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ⁷³

That is, it may be that you dislike a thing, which is really good for you, and it may also be that you like something, but it may be the worse for you. Allāh knows the reality of all things and you know not.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 430-431, footnote 11]

Acceptance of Prayer Demands Eagerness

God Almighty has taught such an excellent method of prayer in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* than which nothing better is possible and which comprises all those matters which are necessary for inspiring the heart with eagerness in prayer. For the acceptance of prayer; it is necessary that there should be eagerness in it for the prayer that lacks eagerness is mere words and is not true prayer. It is obvious, however, that it is not the choice of a person that his prayer should be inspired by eagerness at all times. It is necessary that at the time of prayer the matters that inspire eagerness should be present in the mind of the supplicant. Every sensible person knows that the heart is inspired with eagerness in consequence of two feelings. First, that the worshipper should contemplate God as Perfect and Powerful and possessing all perfect attributes, and to consider His mercies and His benevolence as essential from the beginning to the end for his own

⁷³ Al-Baqarah, 2:217 [Publisher]

existence and preservation, and to consider Him as the Fountainhead of all grace. Secondly, to consider himself and all his fellow beings helpless and poor and dependent upon God's help. These are two matters that inspire eagerness in prayer. Eagerness is inspired when the supplicant finds himself altogether weak and without strength and dependent upon Divine help, and believes firmly that God is All-Powerful and Lord of the worlds and Gracious and Merciful and Master of Judgement and that the fulfilment of all human needs lies in His hands. The *Sūrah Fātiḥah* sets out in the very beginning that God is the Being Who is worthy of all praise and comprises all excellencies and is the Lord of the worlds and is the Fountainhead of all mercies and bestows upon everyone the reward of their actions. By setting out these attributes, God Almighty has proclaimed that all power is in His hands and that all grace proceeds from Him. He has proclaimed His greatness to the degree that He is the fulfiller of all needs in this world and the hereafter, that He is the Cause of all causes and that He is the Source of all grace. He has also indicated that without Him and His mercy the life and comfort and ease of an animate is not possible. Then the supplicant has been taught humility in the words:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ⁷⁴

This means: O the Source of all bounties! We worship Thee alone, and seek help from Thee alone.

That is, we are helpless and can achieve nothing ourselves unless we are bestowed strength and support by Thee. Thus, God Almighty has set forth two matters that

⁷⁴ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:5 [Publisher]

inspire eagerness in prayer; one, His greatness and mercy and the other the helplessness and humility of His servants. These are two matters which it is necessary for supplicants to keep in their minds at the time of prayer. Thus those who have some experience of prayer know that without the presence of these two inspirers of prayers there can be no prayer, and that without these the fire of the love of God does not raise its flames in prayer. It is obvious that a person who does not keep in mind the greatness and mercy and perfect power of God cannot turn to God, and that the soul of a person who does not acknowledge his own helplessness and poverty cannot incline towards the Benevolent Master. This is a verity which needs no deep philosophy for its appreciation. When the greatness of God and one's own humility and helplessness are truly reflected in the heart, that condition itself instructs the worshipper that that is the means of offering true prayer.

True worshippers know well that a concept of these two matters is essential for prayer: first, that God Almighty has the power to foster and to develop and to bestow mercy and reward and that these perfect attributes of His are always in operation; and secondly, that man can achieve nothing without the help and support of the Divine. These two concepts are such that when they are established in the heart at the time of prayer they work such a change in the condition of the worshipper that, being affected by them, an arrogant one falls on the earth and tears start running from the eyes of a haughty hard-hearted one. This is the machine that puts life in a heedless dead person. Through these two concepts every heart is drawn towards prayer. This is the spiritual means through which the soul of a person turns towards God

and observes its own weakness and the need of the help of God. Through it a person arrives at such a stage of selflessness in which no sign of his own opaque existence remains and the glory of a Great Being shines forth and that Being appears as All-Merciful and the Support of every being and the Remedy of every ill and the Source of every grace. At last, a condition of being lost in God manifests itself in consequence of which a person is left with no inclination towards any part of creation, or towards his own self, or towards his own designs, and is wholly lost in the love of God. By the manifestation of that reality one's own existence and the existence of the rest of creation appear as naught. This condition is called the straight path by God which a servant has been instructed to seek through the supplication:

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ⁷⁵

That is to say: Bestow upon us that path of losing of self and of Unity of God and love of God which has been indicated in the previous verses and cut us asunder altogether from everything beside Thee.

In short, God Almighty has bestowed such true means upon man for creating eagerness in prayer that through their adoption a supplicant is transported from the consciousness of self to the world of non-existence. It should be borne in mind that the *Sūrah Fātiḥah* is not merely one of the many means for seeking guidance, but as has been established by the arguments that have been already set forth, it is the only means by the adoption of which prayer is offered with the eagerness of the heart and which the nature of man desires to follow under the

⁷⁵ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6 [Publisher]

urge of a natural demand.

The truth is that as God has appointed rules for other matters, there is a particular rule for prayer and that rule is set out in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. It is not possible that there should be eagerness in prayer unless the factors that inspire the heart with eagerness are present to the mind. Thus, the natural way of prayer is that which is set out in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. It is one of the excellences of that Surah that it sets out prayer along with those factors that inspire it.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in vol. 1, pp. 569-575, footnote 11]

Humble Prayer ⁷⁶

O, Most Merciful One! a humble servant of Thine, useless and full of errors and without any merit, Ghulām Aḥmad, who dwells in India supplicates:

O, Most Merciful One! be Thou pleased with me and forgive my mistakes and sins for Thou art most Forgiving and Merciful. Cause me to do that which should please Thee greatly. Put away my ego from me as far as the East is from the West and make my life and my death and every faculty that I have, devoted to Thee. Keep me alive in Thy love and cause me to die in Thy love and raise me up among Thy perfect lovers.

Most Merciful One! do Thou, by Thy grace, carry to its

⁷⁶ Note: This prayer was sent by the Promised Messiah in a letter to Ḥaḍrat Šūfī Aḥmad Jān Šāḥib of Ludhiāna and he was instructed: 'It is your duty that you should pray in these very words, without any change, on my behalf in the House of Allāh, before the Most Merciful One. Keep this letter with you to help your memory'. Accordingly, Šūfī Šāḥib, on the day of the great pilgrimage in the year 1302 A.H. offered this prayer in the House of Allāh in a loud voice while his companions continued to respond with *Āmīn*.
[Publisher]

conclusion the task for which Thou hast appointed me and the service for which Thou hast created eagerness in my heart. Establish conclusively the truth of Islām through the hand of this humble one in the eyes of the opponents of Islām and in the eyes of all those who are unaware of the excellences of Islām. Keep this humble one and his friends and sincere companions in the shade and support of Thy forgiveness and Graciousness. Be Thou the Provider for them in matters of faith and in matters of the world and transport all of them to the house of Thy pleasure and send down peace and blessings to the utmost degree upon Thy Messenger and his companions and followers. Āmīn.

[Al-Ḥakam, 6th & 13th August 1898 /
Maktubāt-e-Imām-e-Hummām (hand-written manuscript), vol. I, p. 61]

My Powerful God! hear my humble prayers and open the ears and hearts of this people. Show us the time when the worship of false deities should disappear from the world and Thou shouldst be worshipped sincerely in the earth. May the earth be filled with Thy righteous servants who believe in Thy Unity as the ocean is filled with water and may the greatness and truth of Thy Messenger Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) be established in the hearts of people. Āmīn.

My Powerful God! show me this change in this world and accept my prayers for Thou hast all power and strength. Āmīn, O Powerful God.

Our last call is that all praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 603]

6

REPENTANCE AND SEEKING FORGIVENESS

It is obvious that man is very weak by nature and has been charged with hundreds of Divine commandments. On account of his weakness, he falls short in carrying out some Divine commandments and sometimes he is overcome by the desires of the self that incite to evil. On account of his weak nature, he deserves that at the time of any slipping, if he should repent and seek forgiveness, God's mercy should save him from being ruined. It is a certainty that if God had not been the Acceptor of repentance, man would not have been charged with these hundreds of commandments. This proves conclusively that God turns towards man with mercy and is Most Forgiving.

Meaning of *Taubah* (Repentance)

Taubah (Repentance) means that a person should discard a vice with the resolve that thereafter, even if he is thrown into the fire, he would not commit that vice. When man turns towards God Almighty with such sincerity and firm resolve, then God, who is Benevolent and Merciful, forgives him that particular sin. It is one of the high Divine attributes that God accepts repentance and saves a sinner from ruin.

If man had not the hope of his repentance being accepted, he would not be able to refrain from sinning. The Chris-

tians also believe in repentance, but on condition that the person who repents should be a Christian. Islām lays down no condition for repentance. The repentance of the followers of every faith can be accepted leaving out only the sin of denying the Book of God and His Messenger. It is impossible that a person should attain salvation only through his conduct. It is the Benevolence of God that He accepts the repentance of some and bestows by His grace such powers on others that they are safeguarded against sinning.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 189-190]

To reject repentance and forgiveness is to shut the door of human progress. It is obvious to everyone that man is not perfect in himself, but in fact he stands in need of perfection. As after his birth he gradually widens his knowledge and is not born learned and well informed, in the same way, when after his birth he begins to be sensible of his surroundings, his moral condition is at a very low ebb. Observation of the condition of small children would show that most children are inclined to beat others on the slightest provocation and many of them are given to telling lies and using foul language with other children. Some steal and carry tales and are envious and miserly. When they grow up, they fall into the grip of the self that incites to vice and are guilty of diverse types of evil and wickedness.

Thus for most people the first stage of life is impure, but when a fortunate person emerges from the fierce flood of youth, he turns towards God and withdraws from undesirable activities through sincere repentance and occupies himself with purifying the garment of his nature. These are stages of human life which a person has commonly to traverse. This shows that were it true that repentance is

not accepted, it would mean that God does not desire to bestow salvation on anyone.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 192-193]

Repentance Washes out the Stains of Sin

Though God Almighty has announced that the seed of the Unity of God is present in every soul, He has also expounded that that seed is not in equal strength in everyone and that the natures of some are overcome to such a degree by their passions that that light almost disappears. It is obvious, therefore, that the innateness of animal or aggressive faculties is not inconsistent with the innateness of belief in One God. However much a person may be given to following his desires, and however much he might yield to his evil-directing self, he possesses to some degree a natural light. For instance, if under the impact of passion or anger a person commits theft, murder, or adultery then though this act of his is a demand of his nature, yet the light of well-doing which is invested in his nature rebukes him at the very time when he indulges in any of these improper activities. Allāh the Exalted refers to it in the verse:

فَالْتَمَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا⁷⁷

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This means that God bestows a type of revelation upon every person which is called the light of the heart and which is the faculty of distinguishing between good and evil.

For example, when a thief commits theft, or a murderer commits murder, God puts it in his heart at the same time

⁷⁷ Al-Shams, 91:9 [Publisher]

that he has done ill and not good, but he pays no attention to it for the light of his heart and his reason are weak and are overcome by his animal faculties and his ego is insistent.... The turmoil of the ego of such people cannot be reduced, for that which God has imposed cannot be removed by anyone else; yet God has provided a remedy. What is that remedy? It is **repentance, seeking forgiveness and remorse**. This means that if they do evil in conformity with the demands of their ego, or an evil thought arises in their minds and they seek a remedy through repentance and seeking forgiveness, God forgives them. If they stumble repeatedly and are remorseful each time and repent, the remorse and repentance wash out the stain of their sin. This is the true atonement which is the remedy of a natural sin. Allāh the Exalted refers to it in the verse:

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا⁷⁸

Whoso does some evil or wrongs his soul in any way, and then asks forgiveness of Allāh with remorse, will find Allāh Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful.

This verse which is so profound and full of wisdom means that as stumbling and sinning are the characteristics of defective souls, which are manifested by them, there are corresponding to them the eternal attributes of God which are mercy and forgiveness and He is inherently Forgiving and Merciful. His forgiveness is not casual but is His eternal attribute which He loves and which He desires to exercise on deserving people.

Whenever a person turns to God in remorse and repentance at the time of stumbling or sinning, he becomes deserving that God should turn to him with mercy and

⁷⁸ Al-Nisā', 4:111 [Publisher]

forgiveness. This is not limited to once or twice, but it is the eternal attribute of God Almighty that He turns towards a remorseful and repentant servant whenever the latter turns to Him. Thus it is not God's natural law that a **weak person should not stumble** or that the nature of those who are overcome by their animal faculties should be changed, but **His eternal law is that those who commit sin should be forgiven through repentance and seeking forgiveness.**

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 185-187, footnote 11]

Man Turns to God with Remorse and God Turns to Man with Mercy

In Arabic idiom, *Taubah* (repentance) means 'returning', and that is why in the Holy Qur'ān God's name is also *Tawwāb*, that is to say, He Who is Oft-Returning. This means that when a person discarding sin turns to God with a sincere heart, God Almighty turns even more to him. This is altogether in accord with the law of nature. God Almighty has made it part of human nature that when a person turns to another with a sincere heart, the latter's heart is also softened for him. Then how can reason accept that when a servant turns towards God Almighty with a true heart God should not turn to him? Indeed God, Who is Benevolent and Merciful, turns even more towards His servant. That is why in the Holy Qur'ān, God's name, as we have just mentioned, is also *Tawwāb*, meaning Oft-Returning.

Man's turning to God is through remorse and humility and meekness, and God's turning to man is with mercy and forgiveness. If mercy were not one of the attributes of God Almighty, no one would be delivered. It is a pity that people do not ponder over the attributes of God Almighty and depend entirely upon their own actions.

But can it be the attitude of God, Who without any action proceeding from man, has created thousands of bounties for him upon the earth, that, when weak man, being warned of his heedlessness should turn to Him, a turning which is like death and should put off his old garment and should be consumed in the fire of His love, God should not turn to him with mercy? Is this the law of nature?

لَعْنَةُ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ⁷⁹

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 133-134]

Three Conditions for Repentance

It should be borne in mind that there are three conditions for repentance, without fulfilment of which true repentance is not achieved.

The first condition is to get rid of wicked fancies which arouse evil propensities. Ideas have great influence. Every action is preceded by an idea. Thus, the prime condition for repentance is that evil thoughts and fancies should be discarded. For instance, if a person has an illicit relationship with a woman and desires to repent, it is necessary that he should conceive of her as ugly and should call to mind all her low qualities. As I have just said fancies exercise a powerful influence. I have read that some Ṣūfīs carried their fancies to such a length that they saw a person in the form of an ape or pig. Every thing takes on the colour of how you imagine it to be. Thus, the first condition of repentance is that all thoughts, which give rise to evil pleasures, should be discarded altogether.

⁷⁹ Curse of Allāh be upon the liars. [Publisher]

The second condition is remorse. Everyone's conscience admonishes him over every evil, but an unfortunate person leaves his conscience suspended. So a sinner should express remorse over his sin and evil action and should reflect that the pleasure to be derived from them is temporary. He should also consider that every time there is a decline in that pleasure and that in the end, in old age when his faculties are weakened, he will perforce have to give up all these pleasures. Then why indulge in that which in the end has to be given up anyhow? Most fortunate is the person who turns in repentance and becomes determined to discard all corrupt thoughts and vile fancies. When he gets rid of this impurity, he should be remorseful.

The third condition is a firm resolve that he will not revert to those vices. If he adheres to this resolve, God will bestow upon him the strength for true repentance and he will be rid altogether of his vices which will be replaced by good morals and praiseworthy actions. This is a moral victory. It is for God Almighty to bestow the power and strength for it for He is the Master of all power and all strength, as He has said:

أَنَّ الْقُوَّةَ لِلَّهِ جَمِيعًا⁸⁰

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, pp. 138-40]

The Meaning of *Istighfār*

The true meaning of *Istighfār* is to supplicate God that no human weakness should be manifested and that God might support nature with His strength and might enclose it in the circle of His help and protection. The root of

⁸⁰ 'All power belongs to Allāh.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:166 [Publisher]

Istighfār is *ghafara*, which means to cover up. Thus, the meaning of *Istighfār* is that God should cover up the natural weakness of the supplicant with His power. This meaning is then enlarged to include the covering up of a sin that has been committed, but the true meaning is that God should safeguard the supplicant against his natural weakness and should bestow upon him power from His power, and knowledge from His knowledge, and light from His light.

Having created man, God has not become separated from him, but as He is man's Creator and the Creator of all his external and internal faculties, He is also All-Sustaining, that is to say, He safeguards with His support everything that He has created. It is, therefore, necessary for man that as he has been created by God, he should seek to safeguard the features of his creation through the All-Sustaining attribute of the Divine....

Thus this is a natural need of man for which he has been directed to carry out *Istighfār*. This is referred to in the verse:

اللَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْحَيُّ الْقَيُّومُ⁸¹

.... He is both Creator and All-Sustaining. When man was created, the function of creation was completed, but the function of sustaining is forever and that is why *Istighfār* is needed all the time. Every attribute of God possesses a grace and *Istighfār* is needed for winning the grace of the attribute of 'All-Sustaining'. The same is indicated in the verse of *Sūrah Fātiḥah*:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ⁸²

⁸¹ 'Allāh – there is no God but He, the Living, the Self-Subsisting and All-Sustaining.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:256 [Publisher]

This means that: we worship Thee alone and implore Thee alone for help. Thy attributes of Providence and All-Sustaining should help us and should safeguard us against stumbling, lest our weakness may become manifest and we should fall short of worshipping Thee.

It is thus obvious that the true meaning of *Istighfār* is not that a default has occurred, but that no default should occur. Human nature finding itself weak naturally seeks strength from God, as a child seeks milk from its mother. As God has bestowed upon man from the beginning, tongue, eyes, heart, and ears, etc., so He has bestowed upon him from the beginning the desire for *Istighfār* and has made him feel that he is dependent upon God for help. This is indicated in the verse:

وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِرَبِّكَ وَلِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ⁸³

This means that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was directed to supplicate that his nature should be safeguarded against human weakness and should be so strengthened that that weakness should not become manifest. He was also directed to supplicate by way of intercession on behalf of the men and women who believed in him that they should be safeguarded against the punishment for the defaults that might have been committed by them and that during the rest of their lives they should be safeguarded against sin.

This verse comprises a very high philosophy of protection against sin and intercession. It indicates that a person can achieve a high stage of protection against sin and win

⁸² Al-Fātiḥah, 1:5 [Publisher]

⁸³ ‘Ask forgiveness for thy frailties, and for believing men and believing women.’—Muḥammad, 47:20 [Publisher]

intercession if he prays constantly for the suppression of his own weakness and for delivering others from the poison of sin and himself draws strength from God through his supplication and desires that those who are related to him through faith should also partake of that strength. A sinless person needs to supplicate God for strength inasmuch as human nature possesses no excellence of its own but receives excellence at every moment from God, and has no strength of its own but receives strength at every moment from God, and has no perfect light of its own but receives light from God. A perfect nature is bestowed an attraction so that it might draw to itself strength from above, but the treasure of strength is the Being of God. **Angels draw strength for themselves from this treasure and so also perfect man draws the strength of sinlessness and grace from this Fountainhead of strength through the pipe of servitude. Thus from amongst men, he alone is perfectly innocent who draws Divine strength to himself through *Istighfār* and occupies himself throughout with humble supplication so that light should continue to descend upon him....**

Then what is *Istighfār*? It is an instrument through which strength is obtained. The whole secret of Divine Unity is that the quality of innocence should not be regarded as a permanent possession of man, but God should be taken as the Fountainhead for acquiring it. God Almighty metaphorically resembles the heart which has a store of pure blood and the *Istighfār* of a perfect man is like the veins and arteries which are connected with the heart and draw pure blood from it and convey it to the limbs that need it.

Priority of *Istighfār* over Repentance

Istighfār and *Taubah* (repentance) are two separate matters. From one point of view, *Istighfār* has priority over repentance, inasmuch as *Istighfār* is the help and strength which are obtained from God and repentance means standing on one's own feet. It is the way of God that when a person seeks help from Him, He bestows strength and with that strength the supplicant stands on his own feet and thus possesses the faculty to do good, which is called 'turning to God'. This is the natural sequence of it. It is appointed for seekers that they should seek help from God in every condition. Till a seeker obtains strength from God, he can do nothing.

The strength for repentance is acquired after *Istighfār*. If there is no *Istighfār*, the faculty of repentance dies. If you will thus follow up *Istighfār* with repentance, the result will be as set out in the verse:

يُمَتِّعُكُمْ مَتَاعًا حَسَنًا لَّئِنْ أَجَلِي مُسَمًّى⁸⁴

This is the way of God, that those who follow up *Istighfār* with repentance will achieve their cherished grades. Every sense has its limits within which it achieves its high grades; not everyone can be a Prophet or a Messenger or a Truthful (*Ṣiddīq*) or a Testifier (*Shahīd*).

[Malfūzāt, vol. II, pp. 68-69]

Istighfār is a Spiritual Exercise

وَإِنْ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ ثُمَّ تُوبُوا إِلَيْهِ⁸⁵

⁸⁴ 'He will provide for you a goodly provision until an appointed term.'—Hūd, 11:4 [Publisher]

⁸⁵ 'And that you seek forgiveness of your Lord, and then turn to Him.'—Hūd, 11:4 [Publisher]

Remember, the Muslims have been bestowed two things; one for obtaining strength and the other for the practical demonstration of the strength that has been obtained. *Istighfār* is for obtaining strength. It is also called seeking help. The *Ṣūfīs* have said that as physical strength and power is fostered through exercise, in the same way, *Istighfār* is spiritual exercise. Through it, the soul obtains strength and the heart achieves steadfastness. He who desires strength should do *Istighfār*.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. II, p. 67]

Gates of God's Grace are Never Closed

The gates of the grace and benevolence of God Almighty are never closed. If a person turns to Him with a true heart and in sincerity, then He is Forgiving and Merciful and accepts repentance. It is great impertinence and disrespect to speculate how many sinners will God Almighty forgive. The treasures of His mercy are unlimited. He lacks nothing and His doors are not shut upon. All those who arrive before God shall attain high ranks. This is a sure promise. The one who despairs of God Almighty, and his last moment arrives in a state of heedlessness, is most unfortunate and ill-fated because at that time the door is closed.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. III, pp. 296-297]

There are some people who are aware of sin and there are others who are not even aware of it. That is why God Almighty has prescribed *Istighfār* in all circumstances so that man should occupy himself with *Istighfār* with regard to all sins, whether external or internal, and whether he has knowledge of them or not. A person should seek forgiveness for every type of sin whether of the hands, or of feet, or of tongue, or of nose, or of ears,

or of eyes. In these days we should supplicate like Adam:

رَبَّنَا ظَلَمْنَا أَنْفُسَنَا وَإِنْ لَمْ تَغْفِرْ لَنَا وَتَرْحَمْنَا لَنَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ⁸⁶

This prayer has already been accepted. Do not live heedlessly. He who is not heedless would not be involved in any calamity that is beyond his strength. No misfortune arrives without Divine command. That is why I have been taught the prayer in a revelation:

رَبِّ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ خَادِمُكَ رَبِّ فَاحْفَظْنِي وَأَنْصُرْنِي وَارْحَمْنِي⁸⁷

[Malfūzāt, vol. IV, pp. 275-276]

Heedlessness arises from unknown causes. Sometimes without a person knowing it, his heart is suddenly afflicted with rust and darkness. Hence the need for *Istighfār*. It means that one should not suffer from that rust and darkness. The Christians foolishly argue that *Istighfār* shows that the supplicant has been sinful. The true meaning of *Istighfār* is that no sin should be committed. If *Istighfār* means forgiveness of sins committed, then what is the phrase for suppressing sins in future? *Ghafara* and *kafara* have the same connotation. All Prophets needed *Istighfār*. The more a person supplicates by way of *Istighfār* the more innocent he is. Its true meaning is that God saved him. To call someone innocent means that he has been forgiven.

[Malfūzāt, vol. IV, p. 255]

⁸⁶ ‘Our Lord, we have wronged ourselves; and if Thou forgive us not and have not mercy on us, we shall surely be of the lost.’—Al-A‘rāf, 7:24 [Publisher]

⁸⁷ Lord, everything serves Thee; then Lord protect me and help me and have mercy on me. [Publisher]

Salvation Comes from God's Grace

Then arise and repent and win the pleasure of God through good works. Remember that the punishment of wrong beliefs is after death. Being a Hindū or a Christian or a Muslim will be determined on the Day of Judgment. But a person, who goes beyond the limit in wrongdoing, transgression, disobedience and vice, is punished in this life. Such a one cannot escape God's chastisement. So hasten to win God's pleasure and before the dreadful day arrives namely the day of intensity of the plague of which the Prophets have warned, make your peace with God. He is very Benevolent. Through the one moment of the repentance that melts the heart, He can forgive the sins spread over seventy years. Do not say that repentance is not accepted. Remember that you cannot be saved by your deeds. It is grace that saves and not deeds. Benevolent and Merciful Lord, bestow Thy grace upon all of us. We are Thy servants and have fallen down upon Thy threshold. Āmīn.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 174]

7

SALVATION

Man having arrived in this house of darkness cannot attain salvation unless, being himself honoured by the converse of God, or keeping company with someone who is the recipient of sure revelation and who has witnessed clear signs, he arrives at the certain knowledge that he has a God Who is All-Powerful, Benevolent and Ever Merciful, and that Islām which is his faith is in fact true and the Judgement Day and heaven and hell are realities. As a matter of tradition all Muslims believe in the existence of God and in the truth of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), but this faith has no sure foundation. Through such weak faith it is not possible to be deeply affected and to cultivate the true hatred for sin.

[Nuzūl-ul-Masīḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp. 485-486]

The True Meaning of Salvation

It is a pity that most people are unaware of the true meaning of salvation. According to the Christians, salvation means deliverance from the punishment of sin. This is not the true meaning of salvation. It is possible that a person may not commit adultery or theft, or bear false witness, or kill anyone, or commit any other sin so far as he knows, and yet be unacquainted with salvation, for salvation means the achievement of that eternal prosperity for which human nature hungers and thirsts. It is achieved only through the personal love of God after

His full understanding and the establishment of a perfect relationship with Him and its condition is that love should surge up on both sides....

For a seeker after truth the only question is how to achieve true prosperity which should be the means of eternal joy and happiness. The sign of a true religion is that it should carry one to that prosperity. Through the guidance of the Holy Qur'ān we learn that that eternal prosperity is found in the **true understanding** of God Almighty and His holy and perfect and personal love, and in perfect faith which **should create a lover's restlessness in the heart**. These are a few words and yet even a volume cannot set forth a complete exposition of them.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 359-360]

What the Holy Qur'ān says in this context is summarised below:

O My servants, do not despair of Me. I am Ever Merciful and Benevolent and cover up sins and forgive them and am more Merciful towards you than anyone else. No one will have mercy on you as I have. Love Me more than you love your fathers for I am greater in love than they are. If you come to Me I shall forgive all your sins and if you repent, I shall accept your repentance. If you advance towards Me slowly, I shall run to you. He who seeks Me shall find Me and he who turns to Me shall find My door open. I forgive the sins of a penitent even if they are more than the mountains. My mercy upon you is great and My wrath is little because you are My creatures. I have created you and therefore My mercy comprises all of you.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, p. 56]

The Cause of Spiritual Decline

After deep reflection and the receipt of constant revelation from God, I have come to know that though there are a large number of religious sects in this country and religious differences swell up like a flood, the cause of all these contentions is that most people suffer from a decline of the spiritual faculties and of the fear of God. The heavenly light by means of which man can distinguish between truth and falsehood has disappeared from most hearts. The world is taking on the colour of atheism and though the tongues utter the words 'God' and 'Permeshwar', the hearts are more and more inclined towards denial. This is testified to in practice by an absence of good actions. I do not question the integrity of anyone who practices righteousness in secret, but the general condition is that the true purpose of religion is ignored. Most people pay little attention to **purity of heart, true love of the Divine**, true sympathy with His creatures, gentleness, mercy, justice, meekness and all other pure moral qualities like righteousness, cleanliness and truth which are the spirit of religion. It is a matter of regret that religious contentions are on the increase, but spirituality is declining.

The real purpose of religion is to recognize God Who has created the universe and to arrive in His love at a stage where the love of everything else is burnt up and to have sympathy with His creatures and to put on the garment of true purity. I observe, however, that this purpose is neglected in this age and most people adhere to some branch of atheism. The recognition of God Almighty has sadly declined and for this reason boldness in committing sin is increasing. It is obvious that that which is not recognized is not followed by the heart, nor is there any

love for it or any fear of it. All types of fear and love and appreciation are created by recognition.

This shows that the prevalence of sin in today's world is due to lack of understanding. One of the great signs of a true religion is that it should present many means of acquiring the recognition and understanding of God Almighty so that man might be able to restrain himself from committing sin, and so that becoming aware of Divine beauty he should partake of perfect love and so that he should regard cutting asunder from God as worse than hell. **To avoid sin and to be devoted to the love of God Almighty is a grand goal for man and is that true comfort which can be described as heavenly life.** All desires that are opposed to the pleasure of God are the fire of hell and to spend one's life in their pursuit is to lead a hellish life. But the question is how can one be delivered from such a life? The knowledge that God has bestowed upon me in this context is that deliverance from this house of fire depends upon true and perfect understanding of the Divine. Carnal passions that pull people to themselves constitute an irresistible flood which is flowing fiercely to destroy faith, and it is impossible to stem that which is irresistible except through that which is perfect and overwhelming in itself. For this reason, perfect understanding of the Divine is needed for the attainment of salvation.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 147-149]

O my dears! It is a true and tried philosophy that to escape sin, man needs perfect understanding and not any type of atonement. I tell you truly that if the people of Noah had attained the perfect understanding which creates perfect fear, they would not have been drowned, if the people of Lot had been bestowed that understand-

ing, they would not have been subjected to a rain of stones, and if this country had been bestowed that recognition of the Divine Being which makes one tremble with fear, it would not have suffered ruin from the plague as it did. But deficient understanding yields no benefits, nor can its result, which is fear and love, be perfect. The faith that is not perfect is useless and the love that is not perfect is useless, and the fear that is not perfect is useless, and the understanding that is not perfect is useless, and the food and drink that are not perfect are useless. Can your hunger be satisfied with a grain of food or can your thirst be quenched by a drop of water?

Then, O ye who have little resolve and exercise little effort in the search for truth, how can you hope for great Divine grace in return for a little love and a little fear? To purify a person from sin and to fill his heart with love of the Divine is the work of the All-Powerful One, and to establish the fear of His greatness in any heart is dependent upon His will. The eternal law of nature is that all this is bestowed after perfect understanding.

The root of fear and love and appreciation is perfect understanding. He who is bestowed perfect understanding is bestowed perfect fear and perfect love, and he who is bestowed perfect fear and perfect love is delivered from every sin which arises from fearlessness.

For such deliverance we need no blood and no cross and no atonement. We need a sacrifice of self which need is felt by our nature. This sacrifice is in other words Islām. The meaning of Islām is to stretch forth one's neck for slaughter; that is to say, to place one's soul at the threshold of God with complete willingness. The name Islām is the soul of all law and is the life of all commandments.

To stretch forth one's neck for slaughter willingly and cheerfully demands perfect love and devotion, and perfect love calls for perfect understanding. The word Islām indicates that for true sacrifice perfect understanding and perfect love are needed and nothing else. This is indicated by Allāh the Exalted in the verse:

لَنْ يَتَّكَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومَهَا وَلَا دِمَآؤَهَا وَلَكِنْ يَتَّكَالُهُ التَّائِبُونَ مِنْكُمْ⁸⁸

This means that the sacrificial meat you offer cannot reach Me, nor can its blood. On the contrary, the only sacrifice that reaches Me is that you shall fear Me, and be righteous for My sake.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 150-152]

Faith Without Understanding is Not Enough for Salvation

It may be asked that if the blood of Jesus cannot purify from sin, as indeed it cannot, then is there any way of being purified from sin, for a sinful life is worse than death. My answer to this question, which I set forth with full force from my personal experience, is that from the time that man was created up to today there has been only one means of escaping sin and disobedience. That means is that through convincing arguments and shining signs a person should arrive at the understanding which truly makes God manifest, and through which one realizes that God's wrath is a consuming fire, and which proves through a manifestation of Divine beauty that every perfect delight is in God. In other words, through such understanding all veils are lifted from glory and beauty. This is the only way by which passions are restrained and man experiences inner change. On hearing

⁸⁸ Al-Ḥajj, 22:38 [Publisher]

this answer many people will exclaim: Do we not believe in God; do we not fear God and love Him; does not the whole world, with few exceptions, believe in God? Then why is it that they commit all manner of sins and appear involved in diverse forms of wickedness? The answer to this is that faith is one thing and understanding is another. I do not mean that a believer avoids sin, but I mean that a man of perfect understanding avoids it, that is to say a person who has tasted both the fear of God and the love of God. Someone might ask: Why is Satan disobedient though he possesses perfect understanding? The answer is that Satan does not possess that perfect understanding which is bestowed upon the fortunate ones. It is part of human nature that man is necessarily influenced by perfect knowledge and that he does not place himself in the way of ruin when he beholds its terrible countenance. Faith only means to believe as the result of thinking well of a thing; but understanding means to behold that in which one has put one's faith. Thus understanding and sin cannot exist together in a heart as day and night cannot co-exist at the same time.

It is your daily experience that when something proves to be useful, one is immediately attracted towards it and when something is proved to be harmful, one begins to fear it. For instance, if a person does not know that what he has in his hand is arsenic he might swallow a large dose of it deeming it to be some useful medicine. But he who knows that it is a fatal poison will not swallow even the smallest quantity of it, for he would realize that by the eating of it he would pass out from this world. In the same way, when a person knows for certain that God undoubtedly exists and that every type of sin is punishable in His estimation, all sins automatically fall away

from him.

Why Sins are Committed and How they can be Avoided

Someone might raise the question that while we know that God exists and we also know that sins will be punished, yet we commit sins, which shows that we need some other way of avoiding sin. Our answer would still be that which we have already given. It is not at all possible that realizing fully that with the commission of a sin its punishment would fall upon you like lightning, you would yet dare to commit sin. This is the philosophy that is not open to any objection or exception. Reflect well that when you are quite certain of being punished for a sin, you will not act contrary to this certainty. Would you thrust your hand into the fire? Would you jump down from the top of a mountain? Would you jump into a well? Would you lie down in front of a running train? Would you thrust your arm into the mouth of a tiger? Would you present your foot to a mad dog? Can you stay somewhere where lightning is striking repeatedly? Do you not run out quickly from a room the roof of which is about to fall down? Is there any one of you who would not jump out of bed on perceiving a poisonous snake in it? Is there anyone who would not run out of a room in which he is sleeping and in which a fire has broken out? Tell me, why do you do this and run away from all these harmful things, but do not run away from the sins to which I have drawn your attention? The only answer that a wise person can give after full reflection is that there is a difference of knowledge in the two cases. In the matter of sins, the knowledge of most people is defective. They consider sins as evil, but do not look

upon them as they look upon a tiger or a serpent. Hidden in their minds is the notion that the punishment of sins is not certain. They even doubt the existence of God and if they believe in His existence they doubt whether the soul survives after death; and if it survives death, they do not know whether there is any punishment for these sins. They may not be conscious of it, yet most of them have these notions hidden in their minds. But with regard to those occasions of danger of which I have cited instances, and which they avoid, they are certain that if they did not move away from them they would be destroyed and so they run away. Even if they encounter any of them by chance, they run away from it in terror. Thus the truth is that with regard to these things man has certain knowledge that they are fatal, but with regard to religious commandments their knowledge is not certain and is only speculation. One is a case of seeing and the other is only a story. Sins cannot be avoided by stories. I tell you truly that not one Jesus even if a thousand of them were to be crucified, they would not procure you true salvation, for it is only perfect fear or perfect love that rescues from sin. The death of Jesus upon the cross is in itself a fiction, and in any case it has nothing to do with stemming the tide of sin. This is a claim which is all darkness. Experience does not support it, nor is there any relationship between the suicide of Jesus and the forgiveness of other peoples' sins.

The philosophy of true salvation is that man should be delivered from the hell of sin in this very life. Consider then whether you have been delivered from the hell of sin by these tales or has anyone been so delivered through tales which have no truth behind them and which have no relationship with true salvation. Search in the

East and the West and you will not find any people who had through these stories achieved such true purity whereby God becomes visible, and not only one is disgusted with sin but one begins to enjoy the heavenly delights of truth, and one's soul flows like water and falls on the threshold of God and a light descends from heaven and dispels all darkness of the ego.

When on a bright day you open all the windows of your room, the light of the sun will enter your room under a natural law, but if you keep your windows shut, the light will not come in merely by virtue of a tale or story. To obtain light you will have to get up and open your windows and then light will enter and will illumine your room. Can anyone quench his thirst by thinking of water? Indeed not. A thirsty one must somehow or other arrive at a spring of water and apply his lips to the water. His thirst would then be quenched. Thus the water that will satisfy you and will remove the burning sensation of sin is certainty. There is no other means under heaven of getting rid of sin. No cross can deliver you from sin. No blood can restrain your passions. These things have no relationship with true salvation. Understand reality and reflect over verities. As you try things of the world, try this also and then you will soon understand that there is no light beside true certainty which can rescue you from the darkness of self. Without the clear water of perfect insight nothing can wash out your inner filth. Your burning cannot be assuaged without the refreshing water of beholding the Divine. False is the person who proposes other remedies to you, and ignorant is the one who desires to subject you to other treatment. These people cannot bestow light upon you but push you into the pit of darkness. They do not give you sweet water, but increase

your burning sensation. No blood can be of any benefit to you but the blood which might be generated inside you by the nourishment of certainty, and no cross can deliver you but the cross of the straight path; that is to say steadfastness in the way of truth. Then open your eyes and see whether it is not true that you can only see with the help of light and by no other means, and that you can arrive at your goal by following the straight path and in no other way. Worldly things are close to you and the things of the faith are far away. Then reflect on that which is close and understand its law and then apply it to that which is far, for it is the same One Who has framed both these laws....

True Salvation is Bestowed in this Very World

It is not possible that without obtaining light and by remaining blind you should attain salvation through anyone's blood. Salvation is not something which will be bestowed after this world. True and real salvation is bestowed in this very world. It is a light which descends upon the hearts and shows who is floundering in the pit of ruin. Follow the way of truth and wisdom for thereby you will find God. Create warmth in your hearts so that you might be able to move towards the truth. Unfortunate is the heart that is cold, and ill-starred is the nature that is melancholy, and dead is the conscience which is not bright. Be not less than the bucket that falls into the well and comes out full, and be not like the sieve which cannot hold any water which enters it from one side and goes out at the other. Try that you should become healthy and that the poisonous heat of the fever of seeking the world may be removed in consequence of which there is no light in the eyes, there is no hearing in the ears, the taste of the tongue is corrupted, there is no grip in the

hands and there is no strength in the feet. Cut asunder one relationship so another might be established. Block your heart in one direction so that it might find its way in another direction. Throw away the foul insect of the earth so that you might be bestowed the brilliant diamond of heaven. Turn to the Fountainhead which revived Adam with the Divine Spirit so that you may be bestowed kingdom over all things that was bestowed upon your father.

[Review of Religions—Urdū, vol. I, pp. 23-29]

Love of God Leads to Salvation

Next to understanding, what is needed for salvation is the love of God. It is obvious that no one seeks to torment a person who loves him.

Love attracts love and pulls toward itself. If one loves another truly then even if one does not inform that person of one's love it has at least this much effect that the person loved cannot become an enemy of the one who loves. That is why it has been said that a heart inclines towards another heart. The cause of the power of attraction which Prophets and Messengers possess, whereby thousands of people are drawn towards them and love them so much that they are prepared to lay down their lives for them, is that their hearts are filled with sympathy for mankind so that they love people even more than a mother loves her children and desire their comfort even by suffering pain and hardship themselves. In the end their power of attraction begins to attract good hearts towards themselves. Thus when man, although he does not know that which is hidden, becomes aware of the hidden love of a person, how can God Almighty, Who knows the hidden, remain unaware of the sincere love of

anyone? Love is a wonderful thing. Its fire overcomes the fire of sin and puts out the flame of disobedience. True and personal and perfect love cannot subsist along with punishment. One of the signs of true love is that it is a part of the nature of a true lover that he is fearful of his beloved cutting asunder from him, and considers himself lost if he commits the slightest default, and deems it a poison to oppose his beloved, and always yearns to meet him and is so deeply affected by distance and absence that he becomes like one dead. He estimates as sin not only that which the common people regard as sin, for instance, murder, adultery, theft, bearing false witness, but he considers the slightest neglect as a great sin and so also that leaving God he should have the least inclination towards anything else. He is, therefore, constantly occupied with *Istighfār* before the Eternal Beloved and as his nature is never reconciled to any separation from God Almighty, he considers the least neglect which might result from his humanness as a mountain of sin. That is the reason why those who have a holy and perfect relationship with God Almighty occupy themselves constantly with *Istighfār*. It is a characteristic of love that a true lover is always fearful lest his beloved should be annoyed with him and as his heart is thirsty that God should be wholly pleased with him, he is not content even if God Almighty tells him that He is pleased with him. As the winebibber is not satisfied with drinking once and always demands more, in the same way, when the love of the Divine surges up in the heart of a person, it demands that it should win the pleasure of God more and more. The intensity of love demands more and more of *Istighfār*. That is why those who love God perfectly concentrate all the time on *Istighfār*. The great sign of an

innocent one is that he should be occupied with *Istighfār* more than anyone else. The true meaning of *Istighfār* is to supplicate God that, through His grace, the human weakness through which a person might stumble and be guilty of default might be covered up and should not be manifested. Then the meaning of *Istighfār* is extended for the common people so as to comprise a supplication that whatever default might have been committed, God Almighty might be pleased to safeguard the supplicant from its ill consequences and poisonous results in this world and in the hereafter.

Thus the source of true salvation is the personal love of God, the Glorious, which draws to itself the love of God Almighty through humility and supplication and constant *Istighfār*. When man's love of God becomes perfect and its fire burns up human passions, then God's love for him suddenly falls upon his heart and pulls him out of the foulness of the lower life. He then acquires the colour of the holiness of God the Ever-Living and All-Sustaining, and he partakes by way of reflection in all Divine attributes. He then becomes a manifestation of Divine reflections and, through him all the mysteries hidden and latent in the eternal treasure of *Rubūbiyyat* are disclosed to the world.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 378-380]

Do not expect that any other design can purify the human ego. As darkness can be dispelled only by light, in the same way, the remedy for the darkness of sin are the Divine reflections in word and action which in a miraculous way descend upon a good heart from God with fierce rays, and show him that God exists and remove the foulness of all doubts and bring satisfaction and contentment. By the strong attraction of His heavenly power,

that good person is raised to heaven. All other remedies that are put forward are fakes and useless. But for complete purification, understanding alone is not enough. It must be accompanied by earnest prayers. God Almighty is Self-Sufficient, and to attract His grace there is great need of prayers that are accompanied by weeping, crying, sincerity, piety, and tribulation of the heart. It is a common observation that though a suckling infant fully recognizes its mother and loves her and the mother also loves it, yet its crying has close relationship with the mother's milk. On the one side the infant cries bitterly out of hunger and on the other side the mother is so affected by its crying and weeping that milk is generated in her breasts. In the same way, every seeker should prove his spiritual hunger and thirst by his weeping and crying so that the spiritual milk might be generated that would satisfy him.

For spiritual purification understanding alone is not enough. Heart-rending weeping and crying like little infants is also necessary. Do not give up hope and do not be discouraged by the thought that you are involved in many sins and that your supplications cannot have much effect. Man has been created for the love of God and even if he is aroused by the fire of sin, he possesses the faculty of repentance which can put out that fire. You will have observed that however much water is heated, yet when it is poured over fire it puts the fire out.

Ever since God Almighty has created man, his heart has always been cleansed through this means. Without the Living God manifesting His existence and power and Godhead through word and action, and displaying His shining majesty, man cannot be purified from sin by any other means.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 33-34]

How to Establish Relationship with God

The means, which the Holy Qur'ān has taught us of establishing a spiritual and perfect relationship with God, is Islām and the prayer set out in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. This means that one must first devote one's life to the cause of God, and then should be occupied with the prayer that the Muslims have been taught in *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. This is the essence of Islām. This is the only means of reaching God and drinking of the water of true salvation. This is the only means which the law of nature has appointed for man's higher progress and his meeting with God. Only those find God who enter into the spiritual fire, which is the essence of Islām, and occupy themselves with the supplication taught in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*. Islām is the burning fire which, by consuming our lower life and by burning up our false deities, offers the sacrifice of our lives and properties and honour before our Holy God. We drink the water of a new life from this spring and all our spiritual faculties establish a relationship with God. Like lightning, a fire emerges from inside us and another fire descends upon us from above and by their meeting all our passions and the love of anything beside God are consumed and we become dead to our previous life. This condition is called Islām by the Holy Qur'ān. Through Islām our passions suffer a death and through prayer we are revived again. For this second life revelation is necessary. Arrival at this stage is called meeting with God, that is to say, beholding God. Arriving at this stage a person establishes a relationship with God as if he sees Him with his eyes. He is bestowed strength and all his senses and inner faculties are illumined and the attraction

of a pure life is generated with great force. On arriving at this stage, God becomes the eye of a person with which he sees and becomes his tongue with which he speaks, and becomes his hand with which he grips, and becomes his ear with which he hears, and becomes his feet with which he walks. This is the stage to which Allāh the Exalted refers by saying:

يَدُ اللَّهِ فَوْقَ أَيْدِيهِمْ⁸⁹

The hand of God is above their hands;

and also as He says:

مَا كَمْيَيْتَ رَاذُ كَمْيَيْتَ وَلَعَنَ اللَّهُ رُمَى⁹⁰

It was not thou who didst throw but it was God Who threw.

At this stage complete unification ensues with God Almighty and His holy will saturates the soul, and moral faculties that were weak become firm like mountains, and reason and intellect acquire a high degree of delicacy. This is the meaning of the verse:

وَ أَيْدَهُمْ يَزُدُّهُ مِنْهُ⁹¹

He strengthened them with a spirit from Himself.

At this stage the streams of love and devotion well up in such a manner that to die for Almighty and to endure thousands of hardships for Him and to be disgraced for His sake, becomes as easy as breaking a straw. A person is pulled towards God Almighty and does not know who is pulling him. A hidden hand upholds him, and to do

⁸⁹ Al-Fath, 48:11 [Publisher]

⁹⁰ Al-Anfāl, 8:18 [Publisher]

⁹¹ Al-Mujādilah, 58:23 [Publisher]

God's will becomes the purpose of his life. At this stage God Almighty appears very near as He has said:

نَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ⁹²

We are closer to him than his jugular vein.

In that condition a person is like ripe fruit which falls of itself from the tree. In the same way, all the low relationships of such a person come to an end and his relationship with God becomes so strong that he draws away from creation and is honoured with the converse of God Almighty. For achieving this rank, the doors are still open as they were open before, and God's grace bestows this bounty upon the seekers today as He bestowed it before. But this path is not found through mere words and this door is not opened by useless talk and boasts. There are many who desire but there are few who find. The reason is that this rank depends upon true endeavour and true sacrifice. You can go on talking till Judgement Day without avail. To step out in sincerity on to the fire of which people are afraid is the first condition of this path. If there is not practical eagerness, it is vain to talk of it. In this connection God Almighty says:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا دَعَانِ فَلْيَسْتَجِيبُوا لِي وَلْيُؤْمِنُوا بِلِقَائِهِمْ يَوْمَ يُشْعَدُونَ⁹³

When My servants inquire from thee concerning Me, tell them I am close. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls Me. So they should seek to attain my nearness through prayers and be guided.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 394-396]

⁹² Qāf, 50:17 [Publisher]

⁹³ Al-Baqarah, 2:187 [Publisher]

The **philosophy** of salvation is that those who establish a holy and perfect relationship with God become the manifestations of that light which has no decline, and falling into the fire of His love depart from their existence like a piece of iron, which when it is heated in the fire, assumes the character of fire though it is not fire and is still a piece of iron. As through the manifestations of God a surprising change takes place in His lovers, in the same way, God also makes a change for their sake. It is true that God is unchangeable and is free from change, but for such of His servants He manifests such wonderful works as if He is a new God and is not the same God Who is the God of the common people. To the degree to which righteous servants of God **move** towards Him through their pure deeds and their sincerity and fidelity, so much so that they become dead to their previous existence, God also moves towards them with **benevolence and help** so much so that He displays His help and support and jealousy for them in an extraordinary way.

It is impossible and contrary to God's benevolence that He should condemn to hell a servant of His who is **devoted to Him in his love** with his whole heart and soul and with full sincerity in a manner which is the characteristic of true love. Such a servant does not consider anyone equal to Him and regards everyone in contrast with Him as naught and is ready to lay down his life in His cause. How can such a person be the subject of torment? Indeed the truth is that **perfect love is salvation**. Can you deliberately cast into the fire a child of yours whom you love? Then how will God, Who is **altogether love**, cast into the fire **those who love Him** and every particle of whom is sunk in His love? No sacrifice is better than the sacrifice that a person should so love the

True Beloved that he should realize that no one else beside Him is **dear** to him. Not only this, but he should give up the love of his own self and should adopt a bitter life for His sake. When he arrives at this stage, then undoubtedly he **attains salvation**. At this stage of love, he has no need of passing through the chain of transmigration, nor has he the need to have anyone **crucified** for his sake. At this stage of love a person does not merely imagine that he has attained salvation, but his love teaches that the love of God is with him and the love of God causes contentment and peace to **descend** upon his heart. God begins to treat him as He has always treated **those who are dear to Him** and are accepted of Him. He accepts most of his prayers and teaches him fine insights, and informs him of many hidden things, and brings about changes in the world according to his desire. He makes him known and **accepted** in the world with **honour**, and disgraces the person who persists in enmity towards him and strives to disgrace him. He supports him in an extraordinary manner and puts his **love** in the hearts of millions of **people** and manifests wonderful things through him. The hearts of people are drawn to him through Divine revelation and they hasten to serve him with diverse kinds of **gifts** and with money and other articles. God speaks to him in delicious and majestic words as a friend speaks to a friend. The **God Who is hidden from the eyes of the world** manifests Himself to him and comforts him with His words at the time of every sorrow. He carries on a **dialogue** with him in His eloquent and delicious and majestic words and answers his questions and informs him of things that are beyond the knowledge and power of man. He does this not like astrologers, but like mighty kings whose words are full

of kingly power. He discloses to him prophecies which are a sign of his honour and of the disgrace of his **enemies**, which indicate his victory and the defeat of his enemies. In this way, through His words and His works, manifests His existence to him. Then that servant being purified of all sin arrives at the perfection for which he has been created.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 418-421]

Faculties for Seeing God Can be Developed in this Very World

The Holy Qur'ān teaches us that salvation is a matter that is manifested in this very life as He has said:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ⁹⁴

That is, he who is blind in this world will be blind in the hereafter also. This means that a person takes with him from this world the faculties for seeing God and the means of eternal salvation.

God has repeatedly indicated that the means of man's attaining salvation is eternal as God Himself is Eternal. It is not that after a time He recalled that if men cannot attain salvation by any other means, he should bestow salvation on them by killing Himself. A person can be described as having attained salvation when all his passions are consumed and God's will becomes his will and he becomes so devoted to God out of love that nothing remains his and everything becomes God's. All his words and deeds and movements and designs should be for God and he should perceive in his heart that all his delights are now in God and that a moment's separation

⁹⁴ Banī Isrā'īl 17:73 [Publisher]

from God means death for him. He should be so inebriated with the love of God that everything beside God should be naught in his estimation. If the whole world should attack him with swords and should seek to separate him from God through fear, he should remain steadfast like a firm mountain. The fire of perfect love should flare up within him and he should hate sin. As other people love their children and wives and friends so that their love pervades their hearts, and the death of any of them distresses them so much as if it was their own death, that type of love and indeed a greater love should be generated in his heart for God, so much so, that he should become like an insane person in the grip of that love and should be ready to endure every torment and every wound for the sake of that love so that God Almighty may be pleased with him.

When a person is overcome to this degree by his love for God, all his passions are burnt up by the fire of love and a great revolution takes place in his nature and he is bestowed a heart that he did not possess before, and is bestowed eyes that he did not have before, and he is so much affected by certainty that he begins to see God in this very world. That burning sensation for the world with which the nature of the worldly is afflicted like hell, is totally removed from him and he is bestowed a life of comfort and pleasure and delight. This condition of his is called **salvation** inasmuch as his soul falling upon the threshold of God with love and devotion finds unending comfort and the union of his love with the love of God transports him to a station of devotion which is beyond description.

[Chashma-e-Ma‘rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 23, pp. 416-417]

Who Deserves Salvation?

Salvation is not attained through one's effort, but through the grace of God Almighty. The law that God Almighty has appointed for acquiring this grace is never falsified. That law is:

إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ⁹⁵

وَمَنْ يَبْتَغِ غَيْرَ الْإِسْلَامِ دِينًا فَلَنْ يُقْبَلَ مِنْهُ⁹⁶

Salvation is not something whose blessings and fruits will be known to man only after his death. It is something the effects of which are manifested in this very world and a person who has attained salvation is bestowed a heavenly life in this world. The followers of other religions are altogether deprived of this. If it is said that the Muslims are also in the same condition, the answer is that they are deprived because they do not follow the Book. A person who possesses a medicine but does not use it and is careless will derive no benefit from it. That is the case of the Muslims that they have a Holy Book like the Qur'ān but they do not follow it. Those who turn away from the Word of God Almighty are deprived of lights and blessings. Turning away is of two kinds; one, in action and the other in doctrine. A person cannot partake of lights and blessings unless he acts as God Almighty has commanded:

كُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ⁹⁷

[Malfūzāt, vol. IV, pp. 206-207]

⁹⁵ 'If you love Allāh then follow me, Allāh will then love you.'—Āl-e-Imrān, 3:32 [Publisher]

⁹⁶ 'He who seeks a faith other than Islām, it will not be accepted from him.'—Āl-e-Imrān, 3:86 [Publisher]

⁹⁷ 'Keep company with the righteous.'—Al-Taubah, 9:119 [Publisher]

Prophets are Mirrors of God's Countenance

It is perfectly true that he who does not recognize God's Messengers does not recognize God either. A mirror of God's countenance are His Messengers. Everyone who sees God sees Him through this mirror. Then what kind of salvation is this that a person denies the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allāh be on him) all through his life and rejects the Holy Qur'ān and God Almighty does not bestow eyes upon him nor a heart and he remains blind and dies blind and yet attains salvation? It is our observation that when God Almighty desires to bestow mercy upon someone He first bestows sight upon him and bestows knowledge upon him from Himself. There are hundreds of people in our movement who have joined it in consequence of dreams or revelation. The mercy of God Almighty is very wide. If one advances towards Him one step, He comes two steps and if a person hastens towards Him, He runs towards that one and opens the eyes of the blind. Then how can it be accepted that a person believes in Him and accepts Him as One without associate and loves Him and joins the company of His friends and yet God keeps him blind and he remains so blind that he does not recognize God's Prophet? This is supported by the *Ḥadīth*:

من مات ولم يعرف إمام زمانه فقد مات ميتة جاهلية

He who dies without recognizing the Imām of his age dies the death of ignorance and is deprived of the straight path.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 151]

The Vedās Represent God as Vengeful

It is worthy of note that of all the religions, that of the

Vedās is the only one which presents Permashwar as wrathful and vengeful and is opposed to the doctrine that God Almighty forgives the sins of His servants through repentance and seeking forgiveness. Yet it also teaches that Permashwar is the Master of all creation and controls the fate of all animates, and He is the one before Whom all sinners are brought. Unfortunately for mankind, He possesses the attribute of wrath whereby He punishes sin with dire chastisement, but He does not possess the attribute that He can forgive anyone's sin through repentance and supplication. Once a default is committed, there is no acceptance of repentance and no attention is paid to any supplication though it is obvious that man, on account of his natural weakness, cannot safeguard himself against sin and is apt to stumble at every step, yet the Vedās do not offer any way of salvation. The Vedās have only one prescription, which is altogether wrathful and vengeful and which is that for the least sin it prescribes a long and endless chain of incarnations. A sinner deserves mercy on this account also that his weak faculties that fall into sin are not self-created but are created by God. In this situation man deserved that allowance should have been made for this. According to the Āryās, Permashwar makes no allowance in awarding punishment for the fact that He too has something to do with the occurrence of sin.

The Vedās have laid it down as a condition for salvation that man should be purified completely from sin. Judged by the standard of the law of nature, it will be found that it is impossible for man to fulfil this condition, for till man carries out all the obligations that he owes to God Almighty, he cannot claim that he has fulfilled all the requirements of obedience. The law of nature and the

book of man's nature bear witness that at no stage of progress and perfection can man be acquitted of the default that he has not been truly grateful for all Divine bounties and has fallen short in the complete fulfilment of Divine commandments. Thus if man can attain salvation only by carrying out all the obligations that he owes to God Almighty, without a single default, this way of salvation is an impossibility. No one can attain that degree of fulfilment of obligations and therefore no one will attain salvation. That which is impossible and is contrary to the law of nature and contradicts the book of nature cannot be a Divine commandment.

Seek through the East and the West and you will not be able to discover one person who is wholly free from, and innocent of, all defaults and neglects and who has fulfilled all the rights due to man and who claims that he has carried out all the obligations of obedience and gratitude. If there is no such person in the world today, then be sure that such a one has never existed, nor is there any hope of his coming into existence in the future. Then, as it is impossible in view of the law and the book of nature that any person on his own strength should be able to discharge all his obligations to God Almighty, and should be completely grateful to Him. The experience of every person bears witness to this. Therefore it does not behove a book that claims to be from God, to make salvation dependent upon a matter which is impossible to achieve. It is possible, however, that, as in many other respects the Vedās had been perverted, this might also be a perversion and may not be the true teaching of the Vedās.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 50-52]

Christian Concept of Salvation is Contrary to Justice and Mercy

The Christians are agreed that after Jesus, revelation has been sealed and has been left behind and now there is no way of receiving it, and that the door of grace is closed till the Judgement Day. This may be the reason that they have invented a new way of attaining salvation and have proposed a new prescription which is contrary to all principles and is altogether opposed to reason, justice and mercy. It is said that Jesus took upon himself the sins of the whole world and consented to death upon the cross so that through his death mankind might be delivered. God put His innocent son to death to save sinners. We fail to understand, however, that the hearts of people can be purified from the foulness of sin through such a wrongful death and how, by the slaughter of an innocent one, the past sins of others can be forgiven. This is opposed both to justice and to mercy, inasmuch as it is contrary to justice to seize an innocent one in place of a sinner and it is contrary to mercy to kill one's son in this hardhearted manner. Besides, all this has achieved nothing.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 163]

The Holy Qur'ān does not endorse the doctrine of salvation which is set out in the Gospel, namely, the crucifixion of Jesus and his atonement. The Holy Qur'ān affirms that Jesus was a great Prophet and was the beloved of God and near to Him and honoured, but he was only a man. It does not consider it necessary for salvation that the burden of a sinner should be placed upon an innocent one, nor does reason permit that for the sin of X, Y should be held responsible. No government has ever followed this principle.

It is a pity that the Āryās have also taken a wrong stand on the question of salvation, as have the Christians and they too have forgotten the reality. According to the doctrine of the Āryās, repentance and seeking forgiveness amount to nothing. Till a person goes through all the incarnations, which are appointed as a penalty for a sin, salvation cannot be attained and when attained, it is only limited. Permeshwar has not the power to forgive sin, and true repentance, which is a spiritual death and is a fire in which a person is willing to consume himself in order to please Permeshwar, amounts to nothing. This shows the miserliness—God forbid—of Permeshwar. When He directs His servants to forgive those who offend them and does not act upon it Himself, He seeks to teach His servants that which He does not practice Himself. In such case the followers of that religion are bound to think that if Permeshwar does not forgive the sins of an offender then how can they do that which is contrary to the qualities of Permeshwar? What would be the plight of the subjects who are under the rule of kings and sovereigns, who like Permeshwar, have no notion of forgiving offenders?

Besides, what evidence is there to prove the reincarnation of souls? We have never observed that the soul of a person who has died has entered into another body. Then such punishment is also useless, for if a soul which is reborn is not warned that it has been placed in a lower incarnation on account of a particular sin, how will it refrain from that sin?

It should be borne in mind that while human nature possesses many excellent qualities, it is also subject to the defect that on account of its weakness it is prone to commit sins and defaults. The Almighty Who has made

human nature has not invested it with the inclination to commit sins so that He might condemn man to torment, but so that His attribute of forgiveness might be manifested. Sin is doubtless a poison, but the fire of repentance and *Istighfār* converts it into an antidote. Thus after repentance and remorse, sin becomes the means of progress and roots out from inside a person the feeling that he amounts to something and stamps out arrogance and pride and self-exhibition.

Salvation is Only Possible through Grace

Remember that no one can attain salvation through his deeds; salvation is attained purely through grace. The God in Whom we believe is Most Merciful and Benevolent. He is Almighty and suffers from no weakness and defect. He is the Source of all manifestations, and is the Fountainhead of all grace, and is the Creator of all creation, and is the Master of all bounties. He comprises all praiseworthy and perfect qualities, and is the Source of all lights, and is the Life of all lives, and is the Sustainer of everything. He is close to everything but we cannot say that He is all things. He is higher than everything, but we cannot say that there is something intervening between Him and us. He is Imperceptible and Hidden and yet is more manifest than everything. All true delight and comfort is in Him. This is the true philosophy of salvation.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 414-416]

The Christian doctrine that God loved the world, and to provide salvation for the world He arranged to put the burden of the sins of the disobedient ones and of disbelievers and of wicked ones on His beloved son Jesus, and made him accursed in order to deliver the world from sin

and hanged him on the accursed rood, is false in every aspect and is shameful. If it is appraised from the point of view of **justice**, it is obviously wrong that the sin of X should be fastened upon Y. Human conscience does not approve that the punishment of an offender should be inflicted upon an innocent one.

If one reflects upon the reality of sin from the point of view of spiritual philosophy, that also condemns this doctrine. Sin is a poison which is generated when a person is deprived of obedience to God, His eager love and His loving remembrance. As a tree which is uprooted from the earth and is unable to suck water begins to dry up and loses its greenness, the same is the case with a person from whose heart the love of God is uprooted so that it begins to dry up and falls into sin. In God's law of nature there are three remedies for this dryness. One is love; the second is *Istighfār* which means the desire to suppress and cover up, for so long as the root of a tree is firm in the earth there is hope of its greenness; and third is repentance, that is to say, to turn humbly towards God in order to draw the water of love and to get close to Him and to pull oneself out of the darkness of disobedience with the help of good deeds. Repentance is not merely by word of mouth but is completed by good deeds. All virtues are for the perfection of repentance, for the purpose of all is to approach close to God.

Prayer is also repentance for through it we seek nearness to God. That is why God having created the life of man and called it the soul, inasmuch as its true comfort lies in the affirmation of the existence of God and His love and His obedience. He also called it self inasmuch as it seeks union with God. To love God is to be like that tree in the garden which is firmly planted in the ground. This is

man's heaven. As a tree sucks the water of the earth and draws it into itself and thereby expels its poisonous vapours, so is the condition of a person's heart. It sucks in the water of God's love and is thereby enabled to easily expel its poisonous matter and, being based in God, is purely nurtured and spreads and exhibits pleasant greenness and brings forth good fruits. But he who is not firmly related to God, cannot suck in nourishing water and therefore dries up progressively and in the end loses its leaves and only dry and ugly branches are left.

[Sirāj-ud-Dīn 'Īsā'ī ke Chār Sawālon kā Jawāb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, pp. 328-329]

Repentance, Istighfār, and Intercession as Means of Salvation

It is the eternal natural law of God that He forgives sin through repentance and *Istighfār* and accepts the prayers of the virtuous by way of intercession. But we have never observed that X should strike his head with a stone and this should cure the headache of Y. Then we do not know by what law the suicide of Jesus can remove the inner disease of others. Nor are we aware of any philosophy on the basis of which the blood of Jesus can wash out the inner impurity of anyone else. Indeed observation contradicts this. Till Jesus had made up his mind to commit suicide, the Christians possessed the quality of virtue and the worship of God, but after the event of the crucifixion it appeared as if a dam had burst and the banked up water had spread in every direction. That has happened to the passions of the Christians. There is no doubt that if Jesus laid down his life deliberately, he acted very improperly. Instead if he had devoted his life to admonition and preaching, it would have done much good to people. What good did his improper act do? If

after his suicide Jesus had come back to life and had ascended to heaven in the presence of the Jews, they would have believed in him. As it is, the Jews and all wise people consider the ascension of Jesus to heaven a fiction.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 347-348]

I had apprehended that some false charge would be laid against me. For when an enemy is completely refuted he delivers an attack against life and honour. So it happened in my case and this charge of conspiracy to murder was laid against me.... The Christian missionaries were greatly offended with me. My activities had occasioned them great loss. In addition to heavenly signs, **my criticism** of their doctrine had ripped apart the warp and woof of their religion. Their doctrine of atonement was totally refuted by my pointing out that if the curse of the sins of all the sinners had settled on Jesus, it meant that his heart had been emptied of all understanding of God Almighty and His love and that he had become an enemy of God. As a **curse** in its true meaning is not permissible in the case of a righteous one like Jesus, then how can the doctrine of atonement be supported which is based entirely upon his becoming accursed?

I had also pointed out that no act of the Divine is contrary to His eternal way and that means that there should be a large number of illustrations. If sending a son is the way of God then there should be many more sons of God so that a way might be established and some sons should be crucified for the jinns and some for men and some for those creatures which dwell in other spheres. This objection was also such that a moment's reflection on it would rescue a person from the darkness of Christianity....

I pointed out that the doctrine of atonement is also untenable, for its purpose would be either that in consequence of it sin should be abolished altogether, or that every type of sin, whether relating to the rights of God or the rights of people, should be continuously forgiven. The first supposition is entirely false. We observe that the men and women of Europe have not been able to abstain from sin after the atonement and that the people of Europe are guilty of all manner of sins. Alright, leave that aside, and consider the case of ‘prophets’⁹⁸ whose faith was stronger than that of others, even they could not escape sin, and the disciples of Jesus too were involved in sin. Thus there is no doubt that the atonement is not a dam that can bank up the flood of sin. As regards the second supposition, that those who believe in the atonement would be exempted from all punishment for sin, and that whether they commit theft or robbery or murder or misconduct of every description God will not call them to account; this also is untrue as it would cancel God’s eternal commandments and destroy the purity of the law.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 13, pp. 59-60]

The Curse of Sin cannot be Transferred

The Christians should have shown what provision the Gospel has made for that certainty with regard to the existence of God which bestows upon man the insight of the fear of God and burns up the fuel of sin. How can sin be discarded through useless means? These people do not realize that it is altogether unrealistic and wholly ficti-

⁹⁸ The word ‘prophet’ has been used here in the biblical sense and not as an Islāmic term. [Translator]

tious that the sins of the whole world were cast upon one person and that the curse of the sinners was taken from them and was imposed on the heart of Jesus. This would mean that thereafter, with the exception of Jesus, everyone had acquired a pure life and the understanding of God and that Jesus alone was burdened with a curse which was a collection of millions of curses. But when we see that every person has his sins with him and that everyone feels the passion that nature has bestowed on him, whether he accepts Jesus or not, it shows that the accursed ones have not been separated from their cursed lives and that their curse has not fallen upon Jesus. As a curse is firmly fixed to its subject, how could it then have been transferred to Jesus? It is the height of injustice that the curse of every wicked and accursed one, who believes in Jesus, should fall on Jesus and that the person himself should become free from blame and pure. If this unending chain of curses, which will extend to the **Judgement Day**, will continue to be heaped upon poor Jesus afresh, when will he be freed from curses?.... This would mean that Jesus would never see the day again when he should dwell under the shade of the love of God and the light of His understanding. All that this doctrine would achieve would be that a holy one of God might be subjected to unending foulness.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 63-64]

No Contradiction Between Divine Justice and Mercy

The Christian doctrine that Divine justice would not be fulfilled without atonement is utterly absurd. They believe that in his human aspect Jesus was sinless and yet their God burdened him without cause with the curse of

the whole world and had no regard for His own justice. This shows that their God cares not at all for justice. What a spectacle is this that what was sought to be escaped was adopted in its worst form. The great concern was that somehow justice should not be contravened and mercy may also be fulfilled. But by the slaughter of an innocent one, neither justice was established nor was mercy fulfilled.

The notion that justice and mercy cannot subsist together in the Being of God Almighty, inasmuch as justice demands punishment and mercy demands forbearance, is an error in which short-sighted Christians are involved through lack of reflection. They do not reflect that the **justice of God Almighty is also mercy....**

It should be borne in mind that the basic attribute of God is mercy. Justice comes into play after reason and law have been established. Justice is also mercy in another form. When a person is bestowed reason and through it he becomes aware of the limits and laws of God Almighty, he becomes subject to the demand of justice. But for mercy there is no condition of reason and law. As God Almighty desired to exalt mankind through mercy, He laid down the rules and limits of justice. Thus it is ignorance to imagine that there is contradiction between justice and mercy.

Death is not the Fruit of Sin

The Christians say that the death of man and all animals is the fruit of sin, but this is open to two objections. In the first place, it cannot be denied that there was a creation before Adam and that they were subject to death. There was no Adam at the time nor was there his sin. Then how did death come about? Secondly, there is

no doubt that with the exception of one fruit Adam ate everything in the garden and so he must have eaten meat. This also shows that animals were killed before the sin of Adam. Even apart from this, Adam drank water, for eating and drinking go together, and research has established that every drop of water contains thousands of germs. Thus there can be no doubt that before the sin of Adam, millions of germs used to die. One is, therefore, compelled to affirm that death is not the fruit of sin and this refutes the thesis of the Christians.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 72-74]

According to their principle, the Christians attach no importance to righteous conduct; in their view the atonement of Jesus is a sufficient means for the attainment of salvation. We have shown that the atonement of Jesus did not rescue the Christians from sin, nor is it true that because of the atonement every vice has become permissible for them. There is, however, one further matter which is worthy of note, that reason proves that righteous conduct has an effect that bestows the fruit of salvation upon the pious. Even the Christians acknowledge that vice has an effect whereby a person guilty of it is condemned to hell forever. If that is so, one has to make allowance for the corresponding law of nature that good also has an effect and that he who practices it can become heir to salvation.

Was Jesus Free from Inherited Sin?

Another objection we had put forward was that the expiation that the Christians set forth is opposed to the eternal Divine law of nature. There is no instance in the law of nature that to safeguard the inferior the superior might be put to death. We have before us the Divine law

of nature which proves that the inferior is always sacrificed to safeguard the superior. All animates, even the germs in the water, are sacrificed for the preservation of man, who is the noblest of creation. The sacrifice of Jesus is contrary to this obvious law. Every reasonable person can understand that for the protection of that which is dearer and more valuable, that which is inferior to it has to be sacrificed. God Almighty lets millions of animates be sacrificed for the preservation of man, and we, by our very nature, follow the same law. You can thus understand how inconsistent is atonement, in which the Christians believe, with the Divine law of nature.

Another objection that we had raised was that the claim of the Christians that Jesus was free from hereditary as well as acquired sin is obviously unfounded. The Christians admit that Jesus had acquired his body from his mother and that she was not free from sin. The Christians also acknowledge that all pain and hurt are the fruit of sin and there can be no doubt that Jesus felt hunger and thirst and might have suffered from chickenpox and smallpox in his childhood and would have borne the pain of teething and would have suffered from seasonal fevers. According to the Christians, all these are the fruits of sin. Then how could Jesus be regarded as a sinless sacrifice? Besides, according to the Christians, only that person can establish a relationship with the Holy Spirit who is wholly free from sin. Then how did the Holy Spirit establish a relationship with Jesus who was not free from hereditary sin nor escaped the fruit of sin? Apparently, Melchisedec was more deserving of a relationship with the Holy Spirit, for according to the Christians he was free from every kind of sin.

Did Crucifixion Save Christians from Sin?

The Christians acknowledge that the true means of attaining salvation is to be free from sin and yet they do not set forth the true means of achieving freedom from sin. They present a shameful fiction which has no true relationship with freedom from sin. It is obvious that as man has been created for God, his whole comfort and prosperity lie in this that he should become wholly God's, and he can never manifest true comfort till he establishes this relationship with God in practice. When man turns away from God, his case is like that of a person who shuts the windows of his room that open towards the sun. There can be no doubt that with the shutting of the windows the room will become dark and that the light of the sun having been excluded will be suddenly replaced with darkness. It is that darkness which is described as misguidance and hell for it is the root of all pain. If the removal of this darkness and deliverance from this hell is sought in accordance with the law of nature, then there is no need to crucify anyone. The windows should be opened, the shutting of which had caused the darkness. Can anyone believe that we can obtain any light while we insist upon keeping the windows shut through which light could enter? The forgiveness of sins is not a tale which would be illustrated in a future life. Nor is this matter without foundation or comparable to the disobedience and forgiveness of worldly governments. A person is accounted an offender or a sinner when, turning away from God, he draws away from confrontation with the light and brightness which descend from God upon human hearts. That condition is called *Junāh* in the Word of God, which has been perverted by the Parsees into *Gunāh* (sin). The root of the

word means to incline away and to move away from the centre. It acquired the connotation of sin, inasmuch as by turning away a person leaves the spot where Divine light falls and moving away from it puts himself at a distance from the light that can be obtained in the original position. In the same way *Juram* (crime), which also connotes sin, means cutting asunder. Thus an offender cuts asunder all his relationship with God. *Juram* is thus more serious than *Junāḥ*, for the latter merely means a wrong inclination, but the former signifies that a person deliberately commits an offence by breaking God's law and being heedless of any relationship with Him.

That being the reality of true purity, the question arises whether those lights which a person loses through his love of darkness can be acquired by believing in the crucifixion of anyone. The answer is that such a notion is false. The truth is that for the acquiring of those lights it is the eternal law that we should open the windows that face the true sun and the rays that had been averted by shutting them would be revived again. This is borne out by the physical law of nature that we cannot get rid of darkness till we open the windows that let in the direct rays of the sun. Doubtless, therefore, the only correct course that appeals to reason is that those windows should be opened whereby not only shall we obtain light, but shall also behold the Source of all light.

For the removal of the darkness of sin and neglect, it is necessary to obtain light. This is indicated by God, the Glorious, in the verse:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَى فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَى وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

He who is blind in this world shall be blind in the hereafter and even more astray.

This means that the eyes for beholding God and the senses for discovering Him are bestowed in this life and that he upon whom they are not bestowed **in this life** will not find them in the hereafter. The righteous who will see God on the Day of Judgement will carry with them the senses through which they will see Him, and he who does not hear the voice of God in this world will not hear it in the next. To recognize God as He is without any error and to obtain true understanding of His Being and attributes in this world is the source of all light. It is thus obvious that those who believe that God is subject to death and distress and misery and ignorance, and that He can become accursed and can be deprived of true purity and mercy and true knowledge, flounder in the pit of misguidance, and are unaware of true knowledge and insight which are the basis of salvation. The Christians are guilty of gross error in thinking that salvation is freely available and that good deeds are irrelevant in that context. He whom they have deified observed forty fasts. Moses also observed fasts in Sinai. If good deeds are nothing, why did these two exalted ones pursue this vain purpose? As it is clear that God Almighty is disgusted with vice, we can understand that He is greatly pleased with virtue. In this way, virtue becomes an atonement for vice. When a person after being guilty of a vice performs a good deed that pleases God, it follows that the previous condition has been replaced by the subsequent one; otherwise, it would be disrespect. Accordingly, God the Glorious says in the Holy Qur'ān:

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ¹⁰⁰

Surely good deeds do away with evil deeds.

We can also say that vice has a poisonous quality, which destroys, and that virtue has the quality of an antidote that rescues from death. For instance, to shut all the doors of a room is a vice, the necessary consequence of which is darkness. Opposed to this is the opening of the doors that face the sun. This is the virtue the necessary consequence of which is that the light that had been shut off will re-enter the room.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 76-81]

Belief in Kalimah

Your saying is quite true that it is the teaching of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that sins are removed by the affirmation that:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ¹⁰¹

It is a reality that he who believes in God as One without associate and that Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was sent by the same All-Powerful Unique One, will doubtless attain salvation, if he dies in the belief. There is no salvation under heaven through the suicide of anyone and no one can be more insane than one who thinks so. But to believe in God as One without associate and so Compassionate that by His great mercy, in order to rescue the world from misguidance, He sent His Messenger whose name is

¹⁰⁰ Hūd, 11:115 [Publisher]

¹⁰¹ There is none worthy of worship except Allāh and Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allāh. [Publisher]

Muḥammad, the chosen one (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is the doctrine by adhering to which the darkness of the soul is removed and the ego is replaced by the belief in the Unity of God. In the end the mighty upsurge of Unity spreads over the whole heart and a heavenly life begins in this very world. As you observe that by the advent of light darkness disappears, in the same way, when the bright reflection of:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁰²

falls upon a heart, the dark passions of the ego disappear. The essence of sin is that there is a tumult in the passions of the ego by yielding to which a person is called a sinner, and the meaning of:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁰³

which are derived from its various meanings in the Arabic lexicon is that:

لَا مَطْلُوبَ لِي وَلَا مَحْبُوبَ لِي وَلَا مَعْبُودَ لِي وَلَا مَطَاعَ لِي إِلَّا اللَّهُ

That is, there is no one to be desired, or to be loved, or to be worshipped, or to be obeyed except Allāh. Now it is obvious that this concept is totally opposed to the reality of sin and its true source. If a person with the sincerity of his heart establishes this meaning in his soul, then necessarily any opposite concept will be driven out of his heart, inasmuch as opposites cannot subsist together. When the passions of the ego are excluded, that is the condition which is called true purity and real righteousness. The purpose of the second part of the credo, that is

¹⁰² There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. [Publisher]

¹⁰³ Ibid.

to say, to believe in the Messenger of God, is that faith might be established in the Word of God also, for it is necessary for a person who confesses that he desires to become an obedient servant of God that he should believe in God's commandments; and belief in God's commandments is not possible without belief in him through whom the commandments have been conveyed. This is the true meaning of the credo.

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān No. 2, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 418-420]

8

THE PILLARS OF ISLĀM

I have stressed it many times that you should not be satisfied merely with that you are Muslims and profess that:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁰⁴

Those who have studied the Holy Qur’ān know well that God Almighty is not pleased merely with words. The Holy Qur’ān sets out the annals of the Jews that they were in the beginning bestowed great bounties by God Almighty, but when the time came that they were satisfied with only verbal professions and their hearts became full of deceit, dishonesty and evil thoughts, God Almighty imposed diverse types of torments upon them, so much so that some of them were designated apes and swine.

This happened despite the fact that they had the Torah and the Psalms and they professed to believe in them and acknowledged all Prophets. But God was not pleased with them because all their professions were mere words and they had nothing in their hearts....

Reflect on the meaning of the credo¹⁰⁵ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ. By affirming this by his tongue and confirming it with his heart a person proclaims that he has no God beside Allāh.

¹⁰⁴ There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. [Publisher]

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Ilāh is an Arabic word and connotes the One worshipped Who is the Beloved and the True God. This credo, which the Muslims have been taught, is the epitome of the Holy Qur'ān. It is difficult for every one to commit long books to memory. God Almighty is All-Wise and has announced a brief credo. Its meaning is that till God is preferred to everything, till He is acknowledged as the only One to be worshipped and till He becomes the True Goal, man cannot achieve salvation. It is mentioned in the *Ḥadīth* that:

مَنْ قَالَ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ فَدَخَلَ الْجَنَّةَ

He who declares that '*There is none worthy of worship beside Allāh*' will enter paradise.

People have misunderstood this *Ḥadīth*. They imagine that it is enough to repeat the credo verbally for a person to enter paradise. God Almighty is not concerned with words. He is concerned with hearts. This means that those who impress the true concept of the credo upon their hearts, so that the greatness of God Almighty is fully impressed on their minds, will go to heaven.

When a person truly believes in the credo, no one beside God can remain the object of his affection or worthy of his worship or his desired one. The spiritual station of the *Abdāl* a *Qutab* and a *Ghauth* is none other than the sincerest belief in the *Kalima*:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁰⁶

.... This sublime credo excludes all deities beside Allāh. It is, therefore, necessary to push out of one's heart all personal and universal gods so that the heart is purified

¹⁰⁶ There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. [Publisher]

for Allāh alone. Some idols are manifest but some are subtle. For instance, to rely on material means beside Allāh is also an idol, but a subtle one....

Those subtle idols that people carry about under their arms are difficult to throw out. Great philosophers and wise people cannot get rid of them. They are very fine insects which **cannot be perceived except through the microscope of the great Grace of God**. They inflict great harm on a person. Those idols are **personal emotions** which carry men a far distance in repudiation of the rights of their fellow beings and of God Almighty. Many who are called learned and erudite and *Maulavīs* and who study the *Aḥādīth* cannot recognize these idols inside them, and worship them. To avoid these idols is possible only for a very brave man. Those who follow these idols cultivate rancour in their hearts, deny the rights of others, and imagine that they have captured a quarry. They lay undue stress upon material means and rely entirely upon them. Till these tendencies are removed altogether, the Unity of God cannot be established.

[Speeches to Jalsah Salāna, 1906, pp. 1-5]

Ṣalāt Leads to God

After comprehending the meaning of لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹⁰⁷ pay full attention to the Prayer services, the observation of which has been repeatedly emphasised in the Holy Qur'ān; but along with this it is said:

فَوَيْلٌ لِلْمُصَلِّينَ ۖ الَّذِينَ هُمْ عَنْ صَلَاتِهِمْ سَاهُونَ¹⁰⁸

That is, Woe unto those worshippers who are unaware of

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Al-Mā'ūn, 107:5-6 [Publisher]

the reality of prayer.

It should be well understood that **Prayer is an entreaty** which a worshipper makes to God at the time of his separation from Him in torment and with a melting heart that he may be granted a meeting with God, inasmuch as no one can be purified unless God purifies him and no one can meet with God until God brings about a meeting. Man is held in a diversity of chains and collars. He desires to get rid of them but they persist. Despite man's intense desire to be purified his Reproaching Self (*Nafs-e-Lawwāmah*) does sometimes stumble. It is for God to purify a person from sin. There is no power that can purify you by force. God has prescribed **Prayer** for the generation of pure sentiments. *Ṣalāt* is a prayer which is submitted to God in travail and burning with a heart aflame, so that vicious thoughts and evil designs may be got rid of and a holy love and a pure relationship may be established and one may be enabled to keep God's commandments. The word *Ṣalāt* indicates that true Prayer is not offered only with the tongue but must be accompanied by burning and sizzling and being consumed by fire. God Almighty does not accept Prayer until the worshipper at the time of prayer arrives a kind of death....

Ṣalāt is prayer at a very high level, but people do not appreciate it duly. In this age many Muslims are devoted to frequent repetition of pious formulas, as, for instance, the *Naushāhīs* and *Naqshbandīs*, etc. It is a pity that none of these is free from innovations. These people are unaware of the reality of *Ṣalāt* and defame God's commandments. For a seeker none of these innovations is of any benefit compared with the *Ṣalāt*. The way of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him)

was that at a time of difficulty he made his ablutions and stood up in *Ṣalāt* and made his supplications in the *Ṣalāt*. **My experience is that nothing takes one so near to God as *Ṣalāt*.** The various postures of the *Ṣalāt* demonstrate respect, humility and meekness. In *Qiyām* (standing posture) the worshipper stands with his arms folded as a slave stands respectfully before his master and king. In *Rukūʿ* (bowing) the worshipper bends down in humility. The climax of humility is reached in *Sajdah* (prostration), which indicates extreme helplessness.

[Speeches to Jalsah Salāna, 1906, pp. 6-8]

Observe Prayer services regularly. Some people content themselves with one Prayer service daily but they must remember that no one is exempt from them, not even Prophets. It is narrated in a *Ḥadīth* that a company of men who had just accepted Islām requested the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) to be exempted from the *Ṣalāt*. He observed: A religion that does not demand action is no religion at all.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 263]

I tell you again that if you wish to establish a true relationship with God, hold fast to *Ṣalāt* in such a way that your body and your tongue and your spiritual designs and emotions should all become a true embodiment of *Ṣalāt*.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 170]

What is *Ṣalāt*?

What is *Ṣalāt*? It is a supplication addressed to the Lord of Honour without which a person cannot be truly alive, nor can he procure any means of security and happiness. When God Almighty bestows this grace upon a person it is only then that he obtains true comfort. From that moment he will begin to feel pleasure and delight in

Ṣalāt. As he derives pleasure from delicious food he will begin to derive pleasure from his weeping and crying in *Ṣalāt*. Before he experiences that condition in his *Ṣalāt* it is necessary that he should persist in *Ṣalāt* as he swallows bitter medicine so that he may be restored to health. In the same way it is necessary for him to persist in *Ṣalāt* and in making his supplications while he derive no pleasure from them. In such condition he should seek pleasure and delight in *Ṣalāt* with the supplication:

Allāh! Thou knowest how blind and sightless I am, and at the moment I am like the dead. I know that in a little while I shall be called and shall present myself before Thee and no one will be able to stop me. But my heart is blind and unenlightened. Do Thou cause to descend upon it such a flame of light that thereby it may be inspired with Thy love and devotion to Thee. Do Thou bestow upon me such grace that I shall not be raised up sightless nor join the blind.

When he supplicates in this manner and persists in the supplication he will see that a time will arrive when something will descend upon him while he is engaged in such type of prayer which will melt his heart.

[Malfūzāt, vol. IV, pp. 321-322]

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُكَافِئُونَ¹⁰⁹

This means those believers... who are themselves watchful over their Prayers and do not need any reminder from anyone else. Their relationship with God has the quality that the remembrance of God becomes dear to them and becomes the source of their comfort and their very life, so that they are constantly watchful of it and every moment of theirs is devoted to it and they do not

¹⁰⁹ ‘And who diligently guard the observance of their Prayers.’—Al-Mu’minūn, 23:10 [Publisher]

like to be parted from it at any time.

It is obvious that a person is extremely watchful every moment only of that the loss of which he deems would spell his ruin, like one who, while traversing a waterless wilderness in which there is no likelihood of his finding water or food for hundreds of miles, is most watchful of such provisions as he has with him, holding them as dear as his life because of his conviction that their loss would mean his death. Thus the true believers are watchful of their prayers like such a traveller. They do not neglect their prayers even at the risk of losing their wealth or honour, or of incurring someone's displeasure. Any apprehension of missing their prayer causes them great anguish and brings them near unto death. They cannot endure the thought of being neglectful of the remembrance of God for a single moment. They deem prayer and the remembrance of God their essential nourishment on which depends their very life. This condition is reached when God Almighty loves them and a bright flame of His personal love, which is the very soul of their being, descends upon their heart and bestows a new life upon them and thereby their spiritual being is illumined and becomes alive. In such a condition they occupy themselves with the remembrance of God, not out of any sense of formality or desire for appearance, but because God makes their spiritual life, which they hold dear, dependent upon the nourishment provided by His remembrance, as He has made man's physical life dependent upon physical nourishment. Therefore they love this spiritual nourishment more than physical nourishment and are apprehensive of its loss.

This is the consequence of the spirit which is caused to descend upon them like a flame and which generates

perfect inebriation with the love of God in their hearts. They do not desire to be separated from it for a single moment. They suffer for it and endure torments on its account but do not wish to be separated from it for a moment, and are constantly watchful of their prayers. This becomes natural for them, inasmuch as God has made the *Ṣalāt*, which is their loving remembrance of Him, an essential nourishment for them, and by manifesting His personal love for them has bestowed upon them the delicious delight of Divine remembrance. In this way the remembrance of God becomes as dear to them as, and even dearer than, life itself. The personal love of God is a new soul that falls on their hearts like a flame and makes *Ṣalāt* and the remembrance of God a nourishment for them. Thus they believe that they live not by bread and water but by the *Ṣalāt* and the remembrance of *Allāh*.

Ṣalāt Strengths a Believer's Spiritual Faculties

The remembrance of God charged with love, which is called the *Ṣalāt*, truly becomes their food without which they cannot survive and which they guard and watch constantly, like a traveller who in the midst of a stark wilderness guards his scanty supply of bread and water. The Absolute Bestower has appointed this condition also as a stage in the spiritual progress of man which is the last stage. **The remembrance of God charged with love, the technical name of which is *Ṣalāt*,** truly becomes for a worshipper a substitute for nourishment. Indeed he repeatedly seeks to sacrifice his physical soul in return for this nourishment and cannot survive without it, as fish cannot survive without water. He deems a single moment away from God as death itself. His soul is always in prostration at the threshold of God and he finds

all his comfort in God. He is convinced that if he were parted from the remembrance of God for even a moment, he would die.

As food generates a feeling of freshness in the body and strengthens the physical senses like seeing and hearing, in the same way at that stage the remembrance of God which is surcharged with love and devotion strengthens a believer's spiritual faculties, that is to say, his eye acquires the faculty of beholding visions clearly and in a subtle manner, and his ears hear the word of God Almighty and his tongue gives expression to that word in a clear, bright and delightful manner. He sees true dreams frequently which are fulfilled like the advent of the dawn, and on account of his pure and loving relationship with God he partakes of a great number of true dreams that convey good tidings to him. This is the stage at which a believer feels that the love of God serves him as nourishment. This new birth takes place after the spiritual framework becomes ready, and then the spirit, which is aflame with the personal love of God, falls upon the heart of such a believer and suddenly a superior power lifts him above the stage of humanity.

This is the stage which is designated spiritually as a **new creation**. At this stage God Almighty causes a blazing flame of His personal love, which is designated the **spirit**, to descend upon the heart of a believer and thereby removes all its darkness and pollutions and weaknesses. With the breathing of this spirit the beauty of the believer, which hitherto was at a lower stage, arrives at its climax and he acquires a spiritual glory, and the narrowness of a vicious life is totally removed and the believer feels that a new spirit has entered into him which was not there before. He acquires a wonderful sense of serenity

and contentment through the spirit. His personal love surges up like a fountain and waters the plant of his servitude. The fire that hitherto had only possessed a certain degree of warmth blazes up at this stage and burning up all the straw and tinder of the human self brings it under complete control of the Divine and comprehends all the limbs. Then, like a piece of iron which when it is heated in a fierce fire becomes red and looks like fire itself, such a believer manifests Divine signs and actions, as the red hot piece of iron manifests the effects and qualities of fire.

This does not mean that such a believer becomes God. Only it is a characteristic of Divine love that it bestows its own colour upon that which is manifest, while the inner qualities of servitude and its weakness continue. At this stage God becomes the bread of the believer, which sustains his life, and God becomes the water by drinking which the believer is delivered from death, and becomes the cool breeze that comforts the heart of the believer. At this stage it would not be inappropriate to say metaphorically that God enters into the believer and saturates his whole being and makes his heart His throne; then he beholds not through his own spirit but through the spirit of God and hears through it and speaks through it and walks through it and overcomes his enemies through it inasmuch as at this stage he arrives at the station of non-being and the spirit of God bestows upon him a new life through the manifestation of its personal love for him. Then he becomes the illustration of the verse:

فَمَنْ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ، فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰ . . . Then We develop it into another creation. So blessed be Allāh, the Best of creators.’—Al-Mu’minūn, 23:15 [Publisher]

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 212-216]

Ṣalāt Should be Offered in the Most Befitting Manner

It is folly to be satisfied with the outward performance of *Ṣalāt*. Most people observe the *Ṣalāt* only formally and get through it quickly as if it were a burdensome tax which should be got rid of speedily. Then there are those who get through the *Ṣalāt* quickly and thereafter occupy themselves with long drawn out prayers which take twice or three times as much time as the *Ṣalāt*, whereas the *Ṣalāt* itself is nothing but prayer. He who does not observe it in that spirit and does not occupy himself with supplication in the course of it fails to observe the *Ṣalāt*. You should seek to make your *Ṣalāt* delicious like food and cold water, lest it should bring woe upon you rather than blessing. *Ṣalāt* is an obligation due to God. It should be carried out in an excellent manner.

[Malfūzāt, vol. VI, p. 370]

Supplication during Ṣalāt

***Ṣalāt* is the effective criterion of the piety of a worshipper.** He who weeps throughout his *Ṣalāt* is bestowed security. As a child weeps loudly in its mother's lap and is comforted by the love and compassion of its mother, in the same way he who supplicates God with humility and a melting heart in his *Ṣalāt* places himself in the lap of the compassion of Gracious Lord. **He who finds no delight in the *Ṣalāt* has not yet truly tasted the pleasure of believing.** *Ṣalāt* does not merely mean physical postures and movements. Some people get through the *Ṣalāt* quickly like the nibbling of a hen and then start long supplications, that is to say perform the *Ṣalāt* quickly as if it were a formal ceremony, whereas that is the time for supplicating God

Almighty. Having emerged from it without any gain they start their supplications. Make your supplications during the *Ṣalāt*; make the *Ṣalāt* a means of supplication and prayer.

[Malfūzāt, vol. II, p. 145]

Recitation of Al-Fātiḥah in Ṣalāt

Prayer is the purpose and spirit of the *Ṣalāt*. How can that purpose be really achieved except by praying during *Ṣalāt*. Such a worshipper is like one who is granted an opportunity of presenting himself before the Sovereign and submitting his petition, but he says nothing at the time and after he leaves the presence he presents his petition. That would not avail him anything. That is the case of the people who do not pray humbly and earnestly during the *Ṣalāt*. Make all your supplication during the *Ṣalāt* and observe it with all its due requirements.

God Almighty has taught us a prayer at the very beginning of the Holy Qur'ān and has also instructed us in all the requirements of prayer. The recitation of *Sūrah Fātiḥah* is obligatory in the *Ṣalāt*, which indicates that true prayer is offered only in the course of the *Ṣalāt*.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, p. 258]

Ṣalāt to be Offered in Arabic

The *Ṣalāt* may not be observed in any language except the language of the Holy Qur'ān. But after the prescribed prayers and supplications you may supplicate God Almighty in your own vernacular also. You must not neglect the prescribed prayers. The Christians having departed from this principle have lost everything.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, p. 288]

What is the *Ṣalāt*? It is the supplication made humbly in the form of glorification and praise of God, proclaiming His holiness, seeking His forgiveness and calling down His blessings on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). When you are occupied with the *Ṣalāt* do not confine yourselves only to the prescribed prayers like heedless people whose *Ṣalāt* is all formality and has no reality behind it. When you observe the *Ṣalāt*, then besides the prescribed prayers taught by the Holy Qur'ān and by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him), you should set forth your supplications in your respective vernaculars so that your hearts may be moved by your humility and your earnestness.

[Kashfī Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 68-69]

Supplications may be Offered in One's Own Vernacular

Make your supplications during your five daily prayer services. You are not forbidden to supplicate in your own vernaculars. The *Ṣalāt* is not properly observed except with concentration, and concentration cannot be achieved without humility, and humility is generated by a comprehension of that which is said. Therefore, eagerness and travail of the soul are generated more easily by supplication in one's vernacular. But this does not mean that you should dispense with the prescribed prayers and offer the *Ṣalāt* in your own language. That is not what I mean. What I have in mind is that after the prescribed prayers you should also supplicate in your own language. There is a special blessing in the prescribed prayers. *Ṣalāt* means prayer. Therefore during the *Ṣalāt* pray for deliverance from the calamities of the here and the hereafter, and that your end may be good. Pray also for your wives

and children. Be good and shun all evil.

[Malfūzāt, vol. VI, p. 146]

The Philosophy of the Five Daily Prayers

What are the five daily prayer services? They are pictures of your different conditions during the course of the day. You pass through five conditions at a time of trial and your nature demands that you must pass through them. The first of these is when you are warned that you are about to be afflicted with a calamity. For instance, imagine that a warrant has been issued for your presence in court. This is the first condition which disturbs your serenity and contentment. This condition resembles the time when the sun begins to decline, as on the receipt of the court warrant. Corresponding to this condition, the noon prayer (*Zuhr*) has been prescribed, the time of which begins with the decline of the sun.

You experience the second condition when you are drawn close to the place of the calamity. For instance, when having been taken into custody under the warrant you are produced before the magistrate. At that time you are in terror and the light of security seems as if it were about to depart from you. This condition resembles the time when the light of the sun diminishes and the human eye can fix itself upon the sun and it becomes obvious that the time of its setting is near. Corresponding to this spiritual condition the afternoon prayer (*‘Aṣr*) has been prescribed.

The third condition sets in when you lose all hope of deliverance from the calamity. For instance, when after the recording of the prosecution evidence, which is designed to bring about your ruin, you are charged with an offence and a charge sheet is prepared. At this time

you almost lose your senses and you begin to think of yourself as a prisoner. That condition resembles the time when the sun sets and hope of daylight comes to an end. The sunset prayer (*Maghrib*) is prescribed corresponding to this spiritual condition.

The fourth condition is when you are afflicted by the calamity and its deep darkness envelops you completely. For instance, when after the close of the evidence you are convicted and sentenced and are committed to the custody of the police. This condition resembles the time of nightfall, when everything falls into deep darkness. The evening prayer (*'Ishā*) is prescribed corresponding to this spiritual condition.

When you have spent a certain time in the darkness of the affliction, Divine mercy surges up and delivers you from the darkness, as the dawn succeeds the darkness of the night and daylight begins to appear. The dawn prayer (*Fajr*) is prescribed corresponding to this spiritual condition. God Almighty in view of your five changing conditions has prescribed five prayer services for you. You can thus understand that these services have been prescribed for the benefit of your soul. If you desire security against these calamities you should not neglect the five daily services, as they are a reflection of your inner and spiritual conditions. The *Ṣalāt* is a remedy for the calamities that may threaten. You know not what type of circumstances the new day might confront you with. So before the beginning of the day supplicate your Divine Master earnestly that the day may prove to be a source of benefit and blessing for you.

Ṣalāt Protects from Sin

Ṣalāt is an instrument for delivery from sin. It is a quality of the *Ṣalāt* that it makes a person secure against sin and vice. So seek a *Ṣalāt* of that type and try to make your *Ṣalāt* such. *Ṣalāt* is the soul of bounties. The grace of God Almighty is received through the *Ṣalāt*. Then observe it duly so that you might become heirs to the bounties of God Almighty.

[Malfūzāt, vol. V, p. 126]

Significance of Postures in Ṣalāt

What is the *Ṣalāt*? It is the submission of one's humility and one's weakness to God and to seek the fulfilment of one's needs from Him. In the course of the *Ṣalāt* the worshipper sometimes stands before God with folded arms signifying his consciousness of the glory of God and his eagerness to carry out His Commandments; at other times he falls into prostration in complete humility and devotion and seeks the fulfilment of his needs. Sometimes like a beggar he praises Him from Whom he begs and proclaiming His greatness and His glory seeks to move His mercy and supplicates Him. A faith that has nothing comparable to the *Ṣalāt* is altogether empty.... *Ṣalāt* means the love and fear of God and the preoccupation of the heart with His remembrance. That is faith. He who seeks escape from Prayer is no better than an animal. To eat and drink and sleep away the hours like an animal is not faith. This is the practice of the disbelievers....For him who desires to meet God and is anxious to reach Him the *Ṣalāt* is a conveyance by climbing into which he can arrive at his goal speedily. He who gives up the *Ṣalāt*, how shall he arrive?

Since the Muslims have abandoned the *Ṣalāt* or have

given up observing it with the serenity and comfort and love of the heart, being neglectful of its true reality, Islām has begun to decline. The time when the *Ṣalāt* was observed properly was a great time for Islām, when it had become dominant in the whole world. Since the Muslims have given up the proper performance of the *Ṣalāt* they themselves have been abandoned. It is the *Ṣalāt* performed with heartfelt earnestness that delivers a person from all difficulties. It is my repeated experience that I pray for the resolving of some difficulty and while I am still occupied with the *Ṣalāt* God resolves the difficulty.

What happens in the *Ṣalāt*? One raises one's hands in supplication and the Other listens to him well. Then a time comes when He Who listens speaks and responds to the supplicator. This is the situation in the *Ṣalāt*. The worshipper falls into prostration before God Almighty and submits his difficulties and his needs to Him. The result of true and real *Ṣalāt* is that soon the time comes when God Almighty responds to the supplicant and comforts him with His words. Can such an experience be possible without the true observance of *Ṣalāt*?

[Malfūzāt, vol. V, pp. 253-255]

The Real *Ṣalāt*

Ṣalāt is truly so called when a sincere and holy relationship is established with God and the worshipper becomes so devoted to the pleasure of God Almighty and His obedience and so upholds his faith above all worldly values that he is ever ready to lay down his life in the cause of God. It is only then that it can be said that his *Ṣalāt* is worthy to be called by that name. So long as this condition is not established and the worshipper does not become a model of sincerity and faithfulness his prayers

and other actions are without effect.

[Malfūzāt, vol. VI, p. 240]

Ṣalāt, Supplication, and Certainty of Faith

Do not perform the *Ṣalāt* as a mere ceremony, but observe it with the burning and the melting of the heart and supplicate continuously in the *Ṣalāt*. **It is the key to the resolving of all difficulties.** In addition to the prescribed prayers and glorification supplicate much in your vernacular so that your heart should melt, and continue this effort till you arrive at that condition for that is the means of the achieving of all true objectives. All physical postures during the *Ṣalāt* should represent the condition of the heart also. When the worshipper stands in the *Ṣalāt* his heart should also be standing erect for God's obedience; when he bows down the heart should also bow down; and when he goes into prostration the heart should also prostrate itself, which means that the heart should not let go of God at any time. When he reaches that condition he will begin to get rid of sins.

[Malfūzāt, vol. VI, pp. 367-368]

Ṣalāt means Relationship between Man's Servitude and God's Providence

The Holy Qur'ān mentions two gardens; one of these is the garden that is bestowed in this life and that is the delight of the *Ṣalāt*.

The *Ṣalāt* is not a burdensome tax but is a permanent relationship between man's condition of servitude and God's Providence. God Almighty has prescribed the *Ṣalāt* for the establishment of that relationship and has charged it with delight which serves to maintain the relationship. For instance, if married couple do not find

delight in their relationship, the relationship is likely to be disrupted. In the same way if there is no delight in *Ṣalāt* the relationship between the servant and the Master is disrupted. Supplicate behind closed doors that that relationship may be continued and may become a source of delight. The relationship between man's servitude and God's Providence is very deep and is full of light, the reality of which cannot be expressed in words. Until that delight is experienced man continues in a state which resembles animals. Even if that delight is felt only two or three times the worshipper experiences a taste of it, but he who has not even that much experience continues blind:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَى فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَى¹¹¹

[Malfūzāt, vol. VI, p. 371]

Istighfār means that the light has been obtained from God Almighty may be safeguarded and may be fostered. The *Ṣalāt* is prescribed for this purpose **so that five times daily this light may be repeatedly sought from God**. He who possesses insight knows that **the *Ṣalāt* is a spiritual exaltation** and that the only way of deliverance from spiritual ills is repeated supplication in *Ṣalāt* which is charged with earnestness and melting of the heart.

[Malfūzāt, vol. VII, pp. 124-125]

If a worshipper finds that he has lost the eagerness and delight that he used to experience in the *Ṣalāt* he should not become weary, nor be discouraged. He should seek to recover with great eagerness that which has been lost; the appropriate means for which are repentance, *Istighfār* and

¹¹¹ 'Whoso is blind in this world will be blind in the hereafter.'—
Bani Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

earnestness. *Ṣalāt* should not be neglected because of lack of delight in it, but should be on that account multiplied and intensified, as an alcoholic does not give up drinking because he cannot get drunk but goes on drinking till he begins to feel the effect and delight that he desires in liquor. Thus a worshipper who finds the *Ṣalāt* insipid should multiply the *Ṣalāt* and should not become weary of it. In the end his insipidity will be turned into delight. A person who starts digging a well in his search for water has to continue digging till he reaches water. Those who give up digging before water is reached deprive themselves altogether, but those who persist and do not become weary reach water in the end. To find delight in *Ṣalāt* what is needed is *Istighfār*, regular *Ṣalāt*, persistent supplication, eagerness, and steadfastness.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. V, p. 432]

The weapons for our achieving supremacy are *Istighfār*, repentance, knowledge of the faith, the upholding of the Majesty of God Almighty and observance of *Ṣalāt* five times a day. *Ṣalāt* is the key to the acceptance of prayer. Supplicate throughout *Ṣalāt* and do not be neglectful. Shun every vice whether it relates to the obligations due to God or to the obligations due to your fellow beings.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. V, p. 303]

In order to estimate the degree of a person's fear of God it is enough to observe his regularity in *Ṣalāt*. I am convinced that a person who observes *Ṣalāt* diligently and is not held back from it by fear or sickness or worldly trials undoubtedly believes truly in God Almighty. But this degree of faith is bestowed mainly upon the poor. Few of the wealthy partake of this bounty.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 540]

Both fasting and *Ṣalāt* are forms of worship. The fast affects powerfully the body and *Ṣalāt* affects powerfully the soul. *Ṣalāt* generates a condition of burning and melting of the heart, and is, therefore, a higher form of worship than fasting. The latter fosters the capacity for visions.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. VII, p. 379]

Ṣalāt Purifies the Spirit and Fast Illuminates the Heart

شَهْرُ مَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ¹¹²

This verse indicates the greatness of the month of Ramaḍān. The *Ṣūfīs* have recorded that this is a good month for the illumination of the heart. One who observes the fast has frequent experience of visions in this month. The *Ṣalāt* purifies the spirit and the fast illumines the heart. The purification of the spirit means that one may be delivered from the passions of the self that incites to evil; and the illumination of the heart means that the gates of vision may be opened so that one may be able to behold God.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. IV, pp. 256-257]

On one occasion I began to reflect on the purpose of the prescribed expiation of missing a fast and I conceived that the expiation is prescribed so that one may be bestowed the capacity and the strength to observe the fast. God Almighty alone can bestow such strength and everything should be sought from God Almighty. He is the All-Powerful; if He so wills He can bestow the strength for observing the fast on one who is afflicted

¹¹² ‘The month of Ramaḍān is that in which the Qur’ān was sent down.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:186 [Publisher]

with tuberculosis. The purpose of the prescribed expiation is that one may be bestowed the strength for the observation of the fast, and this can be achieved only through the grace of God Almighty. One should supplicate:

Lord! this is Thy blessed month and I am being deprived of its blessings. I know not whether I shall be alive next year, or would find the opportunity of observing the fasts that I am missing. Do Thou bestow upon me, by Thy grace, the strength that should enable me to observe the fast.

I am sure that one with such a heart would be bestowed the needed strength by God Almighty. If God Almighty so wished He would not have prescribed limitations for the Muslims as He had prescribed for earlier peoples; but the purpose of the limitations is the promotion of the welfare of the people concerned. According to me the principle is that when a person supplicate God Almighty with perfect sincerity that he should not be deprived of the blessings of the month of Ramaḍān, he is not so deprived, and if such a one should become ill during the month of Ramaḍān his illness becomes a source of mercy for him, inasmuch as the value of every action is determined by the motive that inspires it. It behoves a believer that he should prove himself brave in the cause of God Almighty.

He who is heartily determined that he would observe the fast but is held back from doing so on account of illness while his heart yearns after the observation of the fast would not be deprived of the bounty resulting from the observation of the fast and angels would observe the fast in his place. This is a subtle matter. If a person finds the observation of the fast difficult on account of the sloth-

fulness of his spirit and imagines that he is not in good health, and that if he misses a meal he would suffer from various types of disorders, such a one, who imagines that a Divine blessing would sit heavy on him, would not deserve any spiritual merit. On the other hand, a person who feels happy at the approach of the month of Ramaḍān and is eager to observe the fast, but is held back by illness from doing so, would not be deprived of the blessings of Ramaḍān.

Many people merely seek excuses and imagine that as they can deceive their fellow beings they can also deceive God. Such people make their own interpretations and deem them correct, but they are not correct in the estimation of God Almighty. The field of such interpretations is vast and a person given to them might become accustomed to the performance of the *Ṣalāt* throughout his life in a sitting posture and may abstain altogether from observing the fast. But God is well aware of the motive and design of a person whose conduct is inspired by sincerity and devotion. God Almighty knows that his heart is eager and He bestows plentifully upon him, for the eagerness of the heart is valuable in the estimation of God.

Those who seek excuses rely on their interpretations, but such interpretations have no value in the estimation of God Almighty. On one occasion when I continued observation of the fast for six months I met a company of the Prophets in a vision who admonished me against imposing so much hardship on myself and directed me to desist. Thus when a person imposes hardship upon himself for the sake of God, He takes pity on him like the parents of a child and directs him to desist.

The Purpose of Fasting is Purification

I have already spoken of the *Ṣalāt*. Next in order is **worship in the shape of the fast**. It is a pity that some who call themselves Muslims at this time desire to modify these forms of worship. They are blind and are not aware of the perfect wisdom of God Almighty. These forms of worship are essential for the purification of the spirit. These people seek to intervene absurdly in a sphere of which they have no knowledge and devise false schemes for the improvement of a territory that they have not visited. Their lives are devoted to worldly affairs; of spiritual matters they have no notion. To be moderate in eating and drinking and to bear hunger and thirst are necessary for the purification of the spirit and promote the capacity for visions. Man does not live by bread alone. To discard all thought of eternal life is to invite Divine wrath.

It should be remembered that the fast does not mean merely that a person should abstain from food and drink over a certain period. During the fast one should be occupied greatly with the remembrance of God. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) occupied himself greatly with worship during the month of Ramaḍān. During that month one should discard one's preoccupation with eating and drinking; and cutting asunder from these needs should address oneself wholly towards God. Unfortunate is the person who is bestowed material bread and pays no attention to spiritual bread. Material bread strengthens the body, and spiritual bread sustains the soul and sharpens the spiritual faculties. Seek the grace of God, as all doors are opened by His grace.

The Institution of Ḥajj

Another form of worship is *Ḥajj*—the Pilgrimage; which does not mean that a person should carry out the formality of the Pilgrimage by providing for his journey across the ocean with money lawfully or unlawfully acquired, and having repeated the prayers and formulas according to the directions of the servitors of the *Ka'bah*, should come back and boast that he has performed the Pilgrimage. The purpose that God Almighty has appointed for the Pilgrimage is not achieved in this manner. The truth is that the last stage of the seeker's journey is that withdrawing himself altogether from the demands and desires of self he should be completely engulfed by the love of God and complete devotion to Him. A true lover sacrifices his soul and heart; and the circuit of the House of Allāh is a visible sign of such a sacrifice. As there is a House of Allāh here below on the earth, so there is one in heaven. Until a person performs the circuit of the House above, his circuit of the House below is not truly performed. One who performs the circuit of the House below puts aside all garments, retaining only one of them to cover his body, but he who performs the circuit of the House above discards all garments altogether and becomes naked for the sake of God. The circuit is a sign of the lovers of God. They go round the *Ka'ba* as if they have no will of their own left and they are devoted wholly to Him.

The Paying of *Zakāt*

Another form of worship is *Zakāt*. Some people pay the *Zakāt* but take no care whether that which they pay as *Zakāt* was lawfully or was unlawfully acquired. If a dog is slaughtered and at the time of its slaughter the name of

Allāh is pronounced upon it, or a pig is slaughtered in the same way, would the eating of the flesh of the dog or the pig become lawful? That which is unlawful will remain unlawful in all circumstances. **The root of the word *Zakāt* means purification.** When a person who acquires something lawfully and out of it spends in the cause of the faith, the rest of it is purified. Many people are involved in these errors and they do not recognize the reality. All this must be discarded.

All the ordinances of Islam are means of salvation, but through their errors people go astray. One should not take pride in one's good actions, nor be pleased with them until such sincere faith is achieved that no one is associated in one's worship of God Almighty and one is enabled to worship righteousness all the time.

[Speeches to Jalsah Salāna, 1906, pp. 20-21]

9

JIHĀD WITH THE SWORD

The philosophy of Jihād and its true significance is so recondite and profound a matter that the people of this age and those of the middle ages have committed grave mistakes on account of their failure to understand it, which has rendered the teachings of Islām open to the criticism of its opponents, whereas Islām is a holy religion which is a mirror of the law of nature and manifests the glory of God.

The root of the Arabic word Jihād means striving and has been metaphorically applied to fighting in the cause of religion....

Why did Islam have to resort to fighting and what is the purpose of Jihād? With the very birth of Islām it was confronted with great difficulties and all peoples conceived enmity against it. It has always been the case that on the advent of a Prophet or a Messenger his opponents, perceiving that his followers are a company of earnest, righteous and courageous people who are likely to march forward quickly, begin to entertain rancour and jealousy against them. More particularly is that the case with the divines and leaders of every religion.... They begin to devise projects to harm the new faith. Very often they feel in their hearts that by persecuting a righteous one of God they have become subject to God's wrath and their wrongful conduct also betrays that their hearts feel guilty, yet the fierce fire of jealousy drives them into the pits of enmity. These were the causes which not only

prevented the leaders of the polytheists and the Jews and the Christians from accepting the truth, but also incited them to bitter enmity and they began to consider means of wiping out Islām from the face of the earth.

As in the beginning the number of Muslims was small, their opponents, out of the natural arrogance which inspires the minds of people who consider themselves superior to the followers of the new faith in respect of wealth, numbers, esteem and rank, treated the Muslims with bitter hostility as they did not desire that Islām, the heavenly plant, should take root upon the earth. They put forth their utmost effort to destroy the righteous and left out no means of causing them hurt. They were afraid lest the new religion should become firmly established and its progress might ruin their own religion and culture. Out of this fear, which terrified their hearts, they had recourse to every type of coercion and cruelty in the attempt to destroy Islām. They killed Muslims savagely and during a long period which extended over thirteen years, they persisted in this form of persecution.

The swords of these wild beasts cut to pieces most cruelly the faithful servants of God who were the pride of mankind; and orphan children and weak and humble women were slaughtered in the streets of Mecca. Throughout this period it was the Divine command that evil should not be opposed and the righteous ones carried out the command in every case. The streets became red with their blood but they raised no cry. They were slaughtered like sacrificial lambs but they breathed no sigh. The Holy Messenger of God, upon whom be the endless peace of heaven and earth, was repeatedly made the target of stones that drew his blood; yet that mountain of truth and steadfastness bore all these torments with a

cheerful and loving heart. This attitude of humility and steadfastness encouraged their enemies to intensify their persecution and they made this holy community their quarry. Then God who does not permit that cruelty and mercilessness should exceed all bounds turned with compassion towards His persecuted servants and His wrath was kindled against the wicked, and He informed His servants through the Holy Qur’ān that He was a witness to everything that had been inflicted upon them and that He now gave them permission to oppose their opponents and that He was Mighty and would not leave the wrongdoers unpunished. **This was the commandment which was designated Jihād.** The original text of this commandment is there in the Holy Qur’ān, which is as follows:

أُولَئِكَ الَّذِينَ يُفْتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَّ تَضَرُّهُمْ لَقَدِيرٌ
 ۝ الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ¹¹³

[Government Angrezī Aur Jihād, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 17, pp. 3-6]

If the **Christian missionaries would listen to me I would counsel them to refrain from raising** objections which can be directed against their own scriptures also. For instance, one of their principal criticisms of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is directed against the battles that he had to wage under Divine command against those disbelievers who persecuted him and his companions for thirteen years at Mecca and inflicted every kind of torment upon them,

¹¹³ ‘Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged—and Allāh indeed has the power to help them. Those who have been driven out of their homes unjustly...’—Al-Ḥajj, 22:40-41 [Publisher]

and then devised a project of killing the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) himself, so that he and his companions were compelled to leave Mecca. But his persecutors did not desist even then. They pursued him and treated him with every type of impertinence and continued to proclaim him false. They subjected the weak ones from among the Muslims who had been left in Mecca to extreme torment. Thus in the estimation of God Almighty, on account of their tyrannical behaviour, they became deserving of chastisement according to the eternal law of God. This chastisement was earned also by those who had helped the Meccans in their misconduct and by those who had on their own carried the torment of the Muslims and the ridicule of their faith to the extreme and used all their power to block the propagation of Islām. Thus those who drew their swords against Islām were destroyed by the sword on account of their wickedness. Then is it fair to object to this kind of fighting, forgetting the battles of Moses and other Prophets of Israel in which thousands upon thousands of suckling babies were slaughtered?

Such objections result from a spirit of mischief and deceit and disorderliness. The Christians sometimes make the response that the battles fought by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) were characterised by too much tenderness towards the enemy in that those of them who accepted Islām escaped all punishment, suckling babies, women, old people, monks and travellers were all spared, nor were churches and synagogues demolished; while the Israeli prophets held all such practices lawful, so much so that more than 300,000 babies were slaughtered at one time. It is a strange conception that the battles fought by Islām

should be open to criticism because of the clemency extended to the enemy and because they fell short of the severity that characterised the battles of Moses and other Israeli Prophets. Had the battles fought by Islām imposed the same degree of severity upon the enemy as was done in the battles mentioned in the Bible, apparently the Christian missionaries would have accepted these battles also as having been carried out under the command of God Almighty. Now every sensible person can decide whether this attitude is an honest one. On the one hand the Christians proclaim that God is mercy, and even His punishment has an aspect of mercy. Then if the battles of Moses despite their severity are believed to have been directed by God Almighty, how is it that the battles that possessed the fragrance of Divine mercy are not accepted as having been imposed by God Almighty? Why should those who deem the slaughter of suckling babies before the very eyes of their mothers and the merciless slaughter of the mothers within sight of their children as having been carried out under Divine command, not accept as falling in the same category battles which a persecuted people were permitted to fight in order to repel the aggression of their persecutors?

[Āryā Dharam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 81-83, footnote]

If chastisement by the sword is in conflict with Divine attributes then this objection would apply primarily and very strongly to Moses who slaughtered whole peoples and caused rivers of blood to flow and left no room for anyone's repentance. The battles undertaken according to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān kept the door of repentance open which is in accord with the law of nature and with Divine mercy. We observe that when God Almighty sends His punishment upon the world in the shape of

plague or cholera, He, at the same time, bestows upon the physicians knowledge of such herbs and remedies as prove effective in putting out the fire of such epidemics. Therefore, it is the method of warfare adopted by Moses which is open to the objection that it did not permit a way of escape for the enemy according to the law of nature. Even when such a way was permitted, it was partial and not complete. It is clear that it has been the Divine way from the beginning that the wrongdoing enemies of the Prophets have been destroyed by the sword. Then why is a similar commandment in the Holy Qur'ān considered as open to objection? Was the God of the time of Moses different from the God of the time of Islām? Or is it that in the time of Moses God loved battle, but now He considers it an evil?

Taking Up Arms Against a Just Non-Muslim Government is not Permitted

It should also be remembered that Islām permits the taking up of the sword only in opposition to people who themselves take it up first, and it permits the slaughter only of those who embark upon slaughter first. It does not lay down that the Muslims while they are the subjects of a non-Muslim sovereign who deals with them with justice and equity should take up arms against him as rebels. According to the Holy Qur'ān this is the way of the wicked and not of the righteous. But the Torah has not made this distinction clear at any place. This shows that the Holy Qur'ān in all its commandments, whether of majesty or of beauty, adheres to the straight line of equity, justice, mercy and beneficence and is unique in this respect also among all the scriptures.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, p. 37]

It is a great error on the part of our opponents that they imagine that revealed guidance must under no circumstances inculcate resistance to the enemy and should demonstrate its love and mercy only by way of meekness and gentleness. Such people imagine that they display great reverence for God, the Lord of Honour and Glory, by attributing to Him only the qualities of gentleness and tenderness. But those who are given to reflection and pondering can easily perceive that such people are involved in gross and obvious error. A contemplation of the Divine law of nature clearly shows that it certainly is pure mercy. But that mercy does not manifest itself by way of gentleness and tenderness in all circumstances. Like an expert physician, it sometimes administers a sweet draught to us and at other times it prescribes a bitter medicine for us.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, p.451]

Prohibition of the Use of Force

No true Muslim has ever believed that Islām should be spread by the sword. Islām has always been propagated through its inherent qualities. Those who, calling themselves Muslims, seek to spread Islām by means of the sword are not aware of its inherent qualities and their conduct resembles the conduct of wild beasts.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qūlūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in , vol. 15, pp. 167]

The Holy Qur'ān clearly forbids the use of force for the spread of the faith and directs its propagation through its inherent qualities and the good example of the Muslims. Do not be misled by the notion that in the beginning the Muslims were commanded to take up the sword. That sword was not taken up for the spread of the faith, but in self-defence against the enemies of Islām and for the

purpose of establishing peace and security. It was no part of the purpose of taking it up to have recourse to coercion in the matter of faith.

[Sitārah Qaiṣariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 120-121]

I do not know from where our opponents have gathered that Islām was spread by the sword. God has set forth clearly in the Holy Qur'ān:

لَا كَرْهَ فِي الدِّينِ¹¹⁴

That is: There is no compulsion in the religion of Islām.

Then who has prescribed the use of force for the spread of the faith, and what force was available for the purpose? Do those people who are converted by force set such an example of sincerity and faith that without any kind of wages or compensation two or three hundred of them issue forth to oppose a force of thousands; or when their number reaches a thousand they vanquish hundreds of thousands? Is it the characteristic of the forcibly converted ones that in the defence of the faith they should offer themselves to be slaughtered like sheep and should testify to the truth of Islām with the seal of their blood? Is it expected of them that they should be such lovers of Divine Unity that they should endure every hardship in their travels in the African desert and spread the message of Islām in those regions; or that they should similarly arrive in China, not as warriors but as dervishes and should so convey the message of Islām that millions of people of that country should become Muslims; or that they should arrive in India clad in the roughest stuff and should win a great part of *Āryāvart* to the allegiance of Islām; or should carry the credo:

¹¹⁴ Al-Baqarah, 2:257 [Publisher]

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ¹¹⁵

to the confines of Europe? Now say honestly whether these can be the achievements of those who are converted forcibly to Islām, so that they disbelieved in their hearts and professed Islām only by their tongues? Indeed not. These are the achievements of those whose hearts are filled with the light of faith wherein God alone dwells.

[Paighām-e-Şulh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 468-469]

The Promised Messiah has come into the world so that he should repel the notion of taking up the sword in the name of religion, and that through his reasoning and arguments he should establish that Islām is a faith which does not at all need the help of the sword for the purpose of its propagation, but that the inherent qualities of its teaching and its verities, insights, reasons, proofs and the living support and signs of God Almighty and its inherent attractions are the factors that have throughout contributed to its progress and its propagation. Let all those who proclaim that Islām had been spread by the sword take note that their claim is false. Islām is not in need of any coercion for its propagation. Should anyone doubt this, let him come to me and stay with me for a while and observe for himself that Islām proves through reasoning and divine signs that it is a living faith. God Almighty now desires and has so determined that all such objections as have been raised against Islām by evil-minded people should be effectively repelled. Those who allege that Islām was spread by the sword will now be put to shame.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, p. 176]

¹¹⁵ There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. [Publisher]

The Promised Messiah will not Fight Disbelievers with Sword

The commonly held doctrine professed by some of the divines that the Promised Messiah will descend from heaven and will fight the disbelievers and will not accept the poll tax and will offer only the choice of death or Islām, is utterly false. It is brimful of all types of error and mischief, and is utterly opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and is only an invention of the impostors.

[Nūr-ul-Ḥaq, Part 1, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 8, p. 67]

There is no compulsion in Islām. There are only three types of wars in Islām:

- (1) Those undertaken in self-defence.
- (2) Those undertaken as chastisement for aggression.
- (3) Those undertaken for the establishment of freedom of conscience, that is to say for breaking up the strength of those who inflicted death upon such as accepted Islām.

As Islām does not permit the use of force or coercion for the purpose of its propagation, it is altogether vain and absurd to wait for a bloody Mahdī or a bloody Messiah; for it is not possible that anyone should appear who should convert people to Islām by the sword contrary to the clear teaching of the Qur'ān.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Mein, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, p. 12]

It is worthy of reflection that if a person does not accept the true faith because he is not yet aware of its holy teaching and its inherent good qualities, then should he be immediately put to the sword? Indeed such a person deserves to be treated mercifully and should be informed gently and courteously of the truth and excellence and spiritual beneficence of the faith and not that his denial

should be repelled by the sword or the gun. Therefore, the commonly held doctrine of Jihād put forward by certain Muslim sects—and their teaching that the time is approaching when a fighting Mahdī will appear whose name will be Imām Muḥammad, and that Jesus will descend from heaven to join him and help him and that the two together will slaughter all the peoples who refuse to accept Islām—is totally opposed to morality. Is this not a doctrine which stultifies all the pure faculties of man and generates emotions like those of wild beasts? People who hold such doctrines have to behave hypocritically towards everyone else.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Mein, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 8-9]

The Promised Messiah was to Put an End To War

The doctrine of Jihād as understood and propagated by the Muslim divines of this age who are called *Maulavīs* is utterly incorrect. It can lead to nothing except that by their forceful preaching they would convert common people into wild beasts and would deprive them of all the good qualities of human beings; and so it has happened. I know for certain that the burden of the sins of those people who commit murders through ignorance on account of such preaching, and who are unaware of the reason why Islām had to fight battles in its early stages, lies on the necks of these *Maulavīs* who go on propagating secretly these dangerous doctrines which result in such grievous loss of life. When these *Maulavīs* call on government officials they bow down before them at such an angle as if they are ready to go into prostration; but when they are among their own ilk they persist in declaring that this country is the House of War (*Dār-ul-Ḥarb*) and that the employment of the sword for the purpose of

the propagation of the faith is a prescribed obligation. There are few of them who do not adhere to this doctrine. The large majority of them are so committed to this false doctrine which is utterly contrary to the Holy Qur'ān and the teaching of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that they condemn anyone who differs with them on this score as the Antichrist (*Dajjāl*) and proclaim that he may be killed with impunity. I have been the subject of such condemnation since a long time....

They should remember that this doctrine of Jihād as conceived by them is not at all correct. Its first result is the sacrifice of human sympathy. Their notion that as Jihād was permitted in the early stages of Islām there is no reason why it should not be lawful now is utterly misguided. We have two answers to it. The first is that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) never raised his sword except against those who first raised it themselves and most mercilessly killed innocent and pious men, women and children. They were killed in such cruel manner the recital of which even today brings tears to our eyes. Secondly, even assuming that in the beginning of Islām such Jihād was obligatory, as is mistakenly conceived by these *Maulavīs*, yet in this age it no longer holds good inasmuch as it is written that when the Promised Messiah appears Jihād by the sword and all fighting for religion will come to an end as he will not take up the sword or any other earthly weapon. **His only instrument will be his supplications, and his only weapon will be his firm determination.** He will lay the foundation of peace and will gather the goat and the lion together. His age will be the age of peace and kindliness and human sympathy. Why do these people not reflect

upon the fact that thirteen hundred years ago the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) had said concerning the Promised Messiah: He will put an end to war.

O Ye Muslim divines and Maulavīs, listen to me. I tell you truly this is not the time of fighting for the faith. Do not disobey the Holy Prophet, (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). The Promised Messiah, who was to come, has appeared and has directed: Henceforth desist from religious wars with the sword which caused bloodshed. To persist in bloodshed and not to desist from such sermons is not the way of Islām. He who accepts me will not only desist from such sermons but will hold this way as most vicious and likely to invite divine wrath....

Now that the Promised Messiah has come, it is the duty of every Muslim that he should refrain from having recourse to fighting for the propagation of the faith. Had I not come there might have been some excuse for this misunderstanding. But now that I have arrived and you have witnessed the day of promise, those who take up the sword on behalf of the faith have no excuse left which they can put forth before God Almighty. He who possesses eyes and can read the Holy Qur’ān and the *Aḥādīth* can realize that this kind of Jihād, which the ignorant ones insist upon in this age, is not authorized by Islām. It is an error which has spread among the Muslims in consequence of the upsurge of unlawful passions or the vain hope of winning paradise through such misguided action....

Ignorant *Maulavīs*, may God guide them, have grievously misled the common people and have told them that such action which is sheer wrong and cruelty and is opposed

to all moral values is the key to paradise. Can it be a good action to shoot down an utter stranger who is walking through the street on some errand and who has done us no harm? If this kind of thing is virtuous, wild animals possess more virtue than such men. Glory be to God, how righteous were those and how truly were they inspired by the spirit of the Prophets who, when they were commanded in Mecca not to resist evil though they might be cut to pieces, behaved like humble and weak suckling babies as if their hands and their arms possessed no power at all....

How grievous and shameful it is that an utter stranger who has done us no harm and who is occupied with some lawful errand should be shot down without any cause and his wife made a widow and his children made orphans and his dwelling turned into a house of mourning? Which *Ḥadīth* and which verse of the Holy Qur'ān authorises such an outrage? Can any *Maulavī* furnish an answer to this question? Ignorant people who have only heard the word Jihād make it an excuse for the fulfilment of their selfish desires.

[Government Angrezī Aur Jihād, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 7-13]

I have brought you a commandment which is that **Jihād with the sword has been ended but the Jihād of the purification of your spirits must continue to be waged**. I say this not on my own but in order to proclaim the design of God. Reflect on the *Ḥadīth* of Bukhārī wherein it is stated that the Promised Messiah:

يضع الحرب

would put an end to fighting for the faith. Accordingly I command those who have joined my ranks that they should discard all such notions. They should purify their

hearts and foster their mercy and should have sympathy for the afflicted. They should spread peace on the earth, for this would cause their faith to spread. They should not wonder how this would come about. As God Almighty has utilized the elements and all earthly means for the purpose of bringing about new inventions to serve human needs like mechanical locomotion, etc., in the same way He will put His angels to work for the fulfilment of spiritual needs through heavenly signs, without the intervention of human agencies and there will appear many flashes of light whereby the eyes of multitudes will be opened.

[Government Angrezī Aur Jihād, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, p. 15]

10

DIVINE DECREE AND DETERMINATION

It should be remembered that though everything has been determined by Divine decree, yet this does not exclude science and knowledge as everyone has to acknowledge that the use of appropriate medicines, through the grace and mercy of God Almighty, benefits the patient. In the same way everyone who is bestowed comprehension of the Divine has to acknowledge as the result of experience that **prayer has a relationship with acceptance**. This is a mystery which has been demonstrated through the **experience of millions of the righteous and our experience has** demonstrated the hidden reality that our prayers have a magnetic quality which attracts the grace and mercy of God, though we may not be able to convince others of this verity through logical reasoning.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 240-241]

It is not within the power of man to transcend the bounds of Divine decrees and scheme of things.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 3]

Man is subject to Divine decree. If a human design should not be in accord with the design of God, no amount of effort can succeed in putting it into effect; but when the time of the design of God arrives, that which had appeared most difficult becomes easily available.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 3]

Two Types of Divine Decrees

Divine decrees are of two types; one may be described as **suspended**, and the other as **absolute**. The operation of a **suspended** decree may be averted by the grace of God Almighty through **prayer and almsgiving**. The operation of an **absolute** decree cannot be averted through **prayer and almsgiving**, though God Almighty bestows some other benefit in return for them. In some cases God Almighty causes a delay in the operation of a decree. The knowledge of these two types of divine decrees can be gathered from the Holy Qur'ān.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, pp. 157-158]

The Holy Qur'ān has set out certain matters for the establishment of the principle that God Almighty is One and is the source and goal of everything from which foolish critics have deduced the doctrine of compulsion. He is the *causa causans* and is the Provider of all means. This is the reason why God Almighty has in some cases described Himself as the Cause of all causes in the Holy Qur'ān, without mention of intervening means. A perusal of the Holy Qur'ān discloses that at certain places these means have also been clearly specified so that man should pay heed to them.

Besides, the Holy Qur'ān specifies the punishment of evil and lays down penalties. If there was to be an unalterable system of Divine decrees and determination and man was to be under absolute compulsion what justification was there for these punishments and penalties?

Prayer And Divine Determination are Juxtaposed

It should be remembered that, unlike the atheists, the Holy Qur'ān does not confine everything within the

system of physical causes, but seeks to lead mankind to belief in the pure Unity of God. Most people do not realize the true nature of prayer, nor do they comprehend the relationship between prayer and Divine determination. God Almighty opens the way for those who have recourse to prayer and does not reject their supplications. Prayer and Divine determination are juxtaposed to each other. God has appointed times for both. His Providence has directed:

أَدْعُونِي أَجْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ¹¹⁶

Call Me, I shall respond to you.

That is why I have always said that the God of the Muslims responds to their supplications; but the god who has not created a single particle or who died under the scourging of the Jews, how can he respond?

تو کارِ زمین را کوی ساختی کہ با آسمان نیز پرداختی¹¹⁷

It is not wise to attempt reconciliation between choice and compulsion on the basis of one's self-conceived and supposed logic and reasoning. This is a vain attempt. One must Honour Godhead and Providence duly and an attempt to comprehend the mysteries of Godhead is disrespectful.

الطريقة كلها ادب¹¹⁸

Two Aspects of Prayer

Divine decrees and determination have a close relation-

¹¹⁶ Al-Mu'min, 40:61 [Publisher]

¹¹⁷ You did not fare well in performing the tasks of this world;
By what right, then, do you seek to handle the heavens. [Publisher]

¹¹⁸ The way of the seeker is all respect. [Publisher]

ship with prayer. Prayer averts the operation of a suspended decree. Prayer is certainly effective against difficulties. Those who deny the effectiveness of Prayer are under a misconception. The Holy Qur'ān sets out two aspects of Prayer. In one aspect God Almighty enforces His own will and in the other aspect He responds to the prayer of a servant. In the verse:

وَلَنَبْلُوَنَّكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ¹¹⁹

God Almighty requires obedience to His will. The meaning is that man's response to an absolute Divine decree must be:

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ¹²⁰

The other time is of the upsurge of the waves of the grace and mercy of God Almighty; it is indicated in:

أَدْعُونِيْ أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ¹²¹

A believer should have knowledge of both these aspects. The Ṣūfīs say that a person's absolute dependence upon God does not become perfect without his being able to distinguish the proper place and occasion for supplication. It has been said that a Ṣūfī does not pray till he recognizes that it is time for prayer.

Sayyid 'Abd-ul-Qādir Jīlānī (may Allāh be pleased with him) has said that through prayer an unfortunate one is rendered fortunate. He has even gone so far as to affirm

¹¹⁹ 'And We will try you with something of fear and hunger.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:156 [Publisher]

¹²⁰ 'Surely, to Allāh we belong and to Him shall we return.'—Al-Baqarah, 2: 157 [Publisher]

¹²¹ 'Pray unto Me, I will answer your prayer.'—Al-Mu'min, 40:61 [Publisher]

that deeply hidden matters, which resemble an absolute decree, can also be averted by prayer.

In short it should always be remembered in connection with prayer that sometimes God Almighty requires obedience to His own will and at other times He grants the supplication of a servant of His. In other words He deals with His servant like a friend. The prayers of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) were accepted on a grand scale and corresponding to this he stood very high in bowing to the will of God and in accepting it cheerfully. He lost eleven children, but he never asked “Why?”

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 224-226]

It is the way of Allāh that when an action proceeds from man its effect is duly manifested by God Almighty. For instance, when we close all the doors of a room, this is our action and the result it entails, namely, that our room becomes dark is the effect of our action manifested by God Almighty. This is God’s eternal law. In the same way if we were to swallow poison in a fatal dose, this would doubtless be our action; our death following upon this action of ours would be God’s action in accord with His eternal law. Thus every action of ours is followed by a Divine action that is manifested after our action and is its necessary result. This system operates both in that which is manifest and also in that which is hidden. Every good or bad action of ours creates an effect which is manifested after our action. The meaning of the verse of the Holy Qur’ān:

122 خَتَمَ اللَّهُ عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ

¹²² ‘Allāh has set a seal on their hearts.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:8 [Publisher]

is that when a person does evil its effect is manifested by God Almighty on his heart and his countenance. The same is the meaning of the verse:

فَلَمَّا زَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ¹²³

that is to say, when they turned away from the truth God Almighty turned their hearts away from being in accord with the truth and in the end, in consequence of their hostility, a change was brought about in them and they were so corrupted that the poison of their hostility overwhelmed their natural light.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 47-48]

Man will have Nothing but what He Strives for

You have raised the objection that the Holy Qur'ān shows that man acts under compulsion and is given no choice. You seem to have overlooked the verses which clearly indicate man's choice and his acquisition of good or evil; for instance:

وَأَنْ تَبْتَغُوا لَهُ ثَمْرًا وَإِلَّا مَا سَأَى¹²⁴

This means that Man will have nothing but that which he strives for and striving is necessary for earning a reward.

Then is it said:

وَلَوْ يُؤَاخِذُ اللَّهُ النَّاسَ بِمَا كَسَبُوا مَا تَرَكَ عَلَى ظُهُورِهِمْ زِينَةً¹²⁵

meaning that if God were to punish people for all that they do by their free choice no living creature would be left on the earth. Again it is said:

¹²³ Al-Ṣaff, 61:6 [Publisher]

¹²⁴ Al-Najm, 53:40 [Publisher]

¹²⁵ Fāṭir, 35:46 [Publisher]

لَهَا مَا كَسَبَتْ وَ عَلَيْهَا مَا اكْتَسَبَتْ¹²⁶

Each one shall have the benefit of the good he does and shall suffer the consequences of the ill he works.

It is also said:

مَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا فَلِنَفْسِهِ¹²⁷

Whoso acts righteously, it is for the good of his own self and whoso does evil bears the burden thereof.

Again it is said:

فَكَيْفَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمْ مُصِيبَةٌ بِمَا قَدَّمَتْ أَيْدِيهِمْ¹²⁸

How will it be when they are afflicted with a misfortune on account of that which their hands had wrought aforetime.

All these verses show that man has choice in his actions. In this connection Mr. ‘Abdullāh Ātham has set forth the verse:

يَقُولُونَ هَلْ لَنَا مِنَ الْأَمْرِ مِنْ شَيْءٍ¹²⁹

and argues from it that this proves compulsion. He is under a misunderstanding. In this verse the word *Amr* means administration and governance. This verse sets forth the thinking of those who had said: Had we any share in matters of governance, we would have so planned that the trouble that was encountered in the battle of Uḥud would have been avoided. In reply to them God Almighty said:

¹²⁶ Al-Baqarah, 2:287 [Publisher]

¹²⁷ Hā Mīm Sajdah, 41:47 [Publisher]

¹²⁸ Al-Nisā’, 4:63 [Publisher]

¹²⁹ ‘They say: Is there for us any part in the government of affairs?’—Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:155 [Publisher]

قُلْ إِنَّ الْأَمْرَ كُلَّهُ لِلَّهِ¹³⁰

Tell them all governance belongs to Allāh.

They were admonished to obey the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) in all circumstances. This verse has nothing to do with choice or compulsion. The reference is to the thinking of some persons that if they had been consulted they would have proposed something different. God Almighty admonished them that the matter was not one for consultation but was a Divine commandment.

It should be clearly understood that *Taqdīr* means only the determination of a measure; as Allāh the Glorious says:

وَحَدَّدَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدَرَهُ تَقْوِيرًا¹³¹

He has created everything and has determined its measure.

This does not show that man has been deprived of choice. Indeed choice is a part of that measure. God Almighty having taken the measure of human nature and human capacity called it *Taqdīr*, and as part of it He determined up to what degree man would have choice in his actions. It is a great mistake to interpret *Taqdīr* as meaning that man is under compulsion not to take advantage of the faculties bestowed upon him by God. This might be illustrated by drawing attention to the mechanism of a watch which cannot continue to work beyond the measure determined by its maker. In the same way a human being cannot achieve anything that is

¹³⁰ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:155 [Publisher]

¹³¹ Al-Furqān, 25:3 [Publisher]

beyond the faculties that are bestowed upon him, nor can he live beyond his allotted span of life.

God does Not Condemn People Without Cause

It is a grievous mistake to imagine that the Holy Qur'ān has adjudged some people as deserving of hell as a matter of compulsion and that they have been compulsorily subjected to the authority of Satan. On the contrary God Almighty had said in the Holy Qur'ān, addressing Satan:

إِنَّ عِبَادِي لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ¹³²

O Satan! you will have no authority over My true servants.

Behold how clearly does Allāh Almighty proclaim man's freedom. This single verse should be enough to satisfy a just minded person. However, the Gospel of Matthew tells a different tale. Matthew states that Satan took Jesus to tempt him. This would mean that Satan had so much authority that he led a holy Prophet by compulsion from place to place and directed him impertinently to prostrate himself before him. Again the devil took him to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth and their glory. See Matthew, 4:18.¹³³

Reflection would show that these verses illustrate that Satan possessed Divine powers. He took Jesus who was unwilling, to a high mountain by his own authority and exercised the power which belongs to God Almighty alone to show Jesus all the kingdoms of the earth.

¹³² Al-Hijr, 15:43 [Publisher]

¹³³ This seems to be an error in the first edition. The reference should read: Matthew 4:1-8. [Translator]

Your being convinced that the Holy Qur'ān teaches that some people have been compulsorily condemned to hell or have their hearts sealed merely shows that you have never studied the Qur'ān in a just manner. Consider what Allāh the Glorious has said:

لَا مَلَكَ جَهَنَّمَ وَنَكَ وَ مَن تَبِعَكَ مِنْهُمْ أَجْمَعِينَ¹³⁴

Addressing Satan, Allāh says: “I will surely fill hell with thee and with those who follow thee from among them, all together.”

This shows clearly that God Almighty will not condemn people to hell without cause. He will so condemn only those who would have earned such condemnation through their misconduct.

It is also said:

يُضِلُّ بِهِ كَثِيرًا وَيَهْدِي بِهِ كَثِيرًا، وَمَا يُضِلُّ بِهِ إِلَّا الْفَاسِقِينَ¹³⁵

He adjudges astray many through this world and guides aright many, but He adjudges astray only those who chose to go astray and are guilty of misdeeds.

This means that man is judged by God according to his conduct; as when a person opens the window of his room that faces the sun the light of the sun naturally falls on his face, but when he shuts the window he creates darkness in the room by his own action.

As God Almighty is the *Causa Causans*, He ascribes both these consequences to Himself, but He has repeatedly expounded in His Holy Word that the misguidance which a person conceives is the consequence of his own mis-

¹³⁴ Sād, 38:86 [Publisher]

¹³⁵ Al-Baqarah, 2:27 [Publisher]

conduct, God Almighty does not wrong anyone as is said:

فَلَمَّا رَاغُوا أَزَاغَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ¹³⁶

So when they deviated from the right course, Allāh made their hearts perverse.

At another place it is said:

فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَرَضٌ «فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا»¹³⁷

In their hearts was a disease, Allāh caused their disease to grow worse. That is to say God tried them and made their condition manifest.

Then it is said:

بَلْ طَبَعَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهَا بِكُفْرِهِمْ¹³⁸

Allāh set a seal on their hearts on account of their disbelief.

This objection of compulsion can, however, be raised against your scriptures. In Exodus, 4:21, God said to Moses:

I shall harden the heart of Pharaoh.

If his heart was hardened its consequence was that he was condemned to hell. See Exodus 7:3; Proverbs 16:4; Exodus 10:3 and Deuteronomy 29:4 “Yet the Lord has not given you an heart of perceive and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day”.

Is this not a clear instance of compulsion? Then see Psalms 148:60: “He appointed a decree that cannot be

¹³⁶ Al-Saff, 61:6 [Publisher]

¹³⁷ Al-Baqarah, 2:11 [Publisher]

¹³⁸ Al-Nisā', 4:156 [Publisher]

averted”; and Romans 9:18:¹³⁹ “Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?” All these references show that your own scriptures are open to the objection that you have raised against the Holy Qur’ān.

[Jang-e-Muqaddas, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 6, pp. 231-234]

¹³⁹ This seems to be a mistake in the first edition. The references should be Psalms 148:6 and Romans 9:20 respectively. [Translator]

11

RIGHTEOUSNESS

In the Holy Qur'ān more emphasis has been laid on virtue and righteousness than on any other commandment. The reason for this is that righteousness bestows the strength to resist all vice and urges progress towards all good. Righteousness is in all circumstances a charm that guarantees security and is a citadel for safeguarding against all harm.

A righteous person can avoid many vain and harmful contentions that often lead other people to ruin. They sow the seed of dissension among the people through their hasty actions and suspicions and lay themselves open to objection.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 342]

Elements of Righteousness

There are many elements in righteousness. It is righteousness to avoid pride and self-esteem and to refrain from unlawful acquisition and ill manners. A person who displays courtesy and good manners converts his enemies into friends.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, p. 81]

Blessed is the one who adopts righteousness in a time of success and prosperity and most unfortunate is one who does not turn to righteousness after stumbling.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, p. 157]

The spiritual beauty of man is to walk along all the finer

ways of righteousness. They are the attractive features of spiritual beauty. It is obvious that to be mindful of the trusts of God Almighty, and to fulfil all the covenants of faith, and to employ all faculties and limbs both overt, like eyes and ears and hands and feet and others like them, and those that are covert, like the mind and other faculties and qualities, on their proper occasions and to restrain them from coming into action on improper occasions, and to be warned against the subtle attacks of vice and to be mindful of the rights of one's fellow beings, is the way of perfecting one's spiritual beauty. God Almighty has in the Holy Qur'ān designated righteousness as a raiment. *Libās-ut-taqwā*¹⁴⁰ is an expression of the Holy Qur'ān.¹⁴¹ This is an indication that spiritual beauty and spiritual ornament are achieved through righteousness. Righteousness means that one must be mindful even of the smallest details of the Divine trusts and covenants and also of all the trusts and covenants of one's fellow beings, as far as it may be possible. That is, one must try to fulfil, to the best of one's ability, all the requirements in their minutest details.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 209-210]

True righteousness and ignorance cannot subsist together. True righteousness is accompanied by a light, as God the Glorious, has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا
وَيُكَفِّرْ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ The garment of righteousness. [Publisher]

¹⁴¹ Al-A'rāf, 7:27 [Publisher]

¹⁴² Al-Anfāl, 8:30 [Publisher]

وَيَجْعَلُ لَكُمْ نُورًا تَمْشُونَ بِهِ¹⁴³

That is, O ye who believe, if you remain steadfast in righteousness and hold fast to it for the sake of Allāh, with firmness and perseverance, He will single you out from among your detractors with marked distinction. That is, you shall be blessed with a light which will accompany you wherever you go.

That is to say, that that light would illumine all their actions and words and faculties and senses. Their intellect would be illumined and there would be light in all that they utter. There would be light in their eyes and in their ears and in their tongues and in their speech and in all their movements. The ways along which they walk would be lit up. All their ways, the ways of their faculties and their senses will be filled with light, and they will walk altogether in light.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 177-178]

Righteousness is Essential for Heavenly Knowledge

There is a great distinction between the acquisition of worldly knowledge and knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān. **Righteousness** is not needed for the study of grammar, physics, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, etc. It is not necessary that a student of these subjects should observe *Ṣalāt* and the fast and should be mindful of Divine commandments and prohibitions and should subordinate his every action and word to Divine directions. Indeed it often happens that the seekers of such knowledge become atheistic and are involved in every kind of vice. Today the world presents a remarkable spectacle.

¹⁴³ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:29 [Publisher]

Though the people of Europe and America acquire high proficiency in worldly arts and sciences and daily make new inventions, their moral and spiritual condition is deplorable. We cannot even mention some of the scenes that are witnessed in the parks of London and the hotels of Paris and are published in the daily press.

On the other hand righteousness is an essential condition for heavenly learning and for acquiring knowledge of the mysteries of the Holy Qur'ān. For this purpose sincere repentance is needed. For the door of Qur'ānic knowledge is not opened until a seeker of it carries the burden of Divine commands with perfect humility and meekness and turns to Him humbly, trembling before His glory and His might. Without these he cannot obtain from the Holy Qur'ān the means of fostering those qualities and faculties which generate delight and comfort for the soul. The Holy Qur'ān is the Book of God and its knowledge is in the hand of God; thus righteousness is the ladder for the acquisition of such knowledge. Then how can it be possible that the faithless wicked who are evil-minded and are held prisoner by their earthly passions should achieve such knowledge? A Muslim who does not purify his soul is not bestowed knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān, however high may be his proficiency in grammar and literary subjects, and however much he might enjoy the esteem of the worldly.

At this time the attention of the world is centred upon worldly knowledge and the light of Western learning continues to astonish mankind with new inventions and manufactures. Unfortunately, the Muslims also have chosen to follow the West for the purpose of fostering their own welfare and they take pride in copying Europe and America. That is the attitude of the Muslims who

follow the new light. Those who are known as old-fashioned Muslims and deem themselves the guardians of the faith are caught in the niceties of points of grammar and in determining the correct manner of the pronunciation of *Ḍāllīn*. They pay no attention to the true meaning of the Holy Qur'ān, nor are they capable of doing so as they do not address themselves to the purification of their souls.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, pp. 425-427]

Qualities of the Righteous

To become truly righteous it is necessary that a person abandoning utterly such outstanding vices as adultery, theft, trespass, hypocrisy, self-esteem, scorn of fellow beings, miserliness, should eschew all low morals and should make progress in high moral values. He should behave towards his fellow beings with politeness, courtesy and sympathy and should cultivate true fidelity and sincerity towards God Almighty. He should constantly seek occasions of beneficent service. He who combines all these qualities in himself is alone righteous. The possession of any one of these qualities would not entitle a person to be accounted righteous unless he possesses collectively all of them. It is only these concerning whom it is said:

لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ¹⁴⁴

What more would they need? God Almighty becomes their guardian as it is said:

وَهُوَ يَتَوَقَّى الصَّالِحِينَ¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ 'On them shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve.'—Al-A'rāf, 7:36 [Publisher]

¹⁴⁵ 'And He protects the righteous.'—Al-A'rāf, 7:197 [Publisher]

In another *Ḥadīth* it is stated that God Almighty becomes their hands with which they grasp, and becomes their eyes with which they see, and becomes their ears with which they hear and becomes their feet with which they walk.

In another *Ḥadīth* it is stated that God has proclaimed that he who bears enmity towards a friend of Mine should become ready to contend with Me.

Still another *Ḥadīth* declares that when anyone attacks a friend of God, He pounces upon him with the fierceness with which a tigress pounces upon one who seeks to deprive it of its young.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. IV, pp. 400-401]

Urdū Couplets:

We have been granted righteousness by that Friend;
It is not from us; for it is a gift of God.

Strive hard if you are truthful and sincere;
So that you attain righteousness, which is the prerequisite to communion with the Beloved (*Liqā*).

This is the mirror which reflects the Creator;
This alone sharpens the sword of prayer.

The root of every virtue is the fear of God (*Ittiqā*);
If this root is intact, everything will remain intact.¹⁴⁶

This alone is the hallmark of the lofty status of saints;
What more do they have, except righteousness?

Fear Him O friends! He is the All-Seeing God;
If you ponder over it, even this world is the place of
reward and punishment.

¹⁴⁶ This line was revealed to the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him) when he was composing these couplets. [Translator]

He granted me this reward because of righteousness
Glory be to Him, Who put my enemies to shame.

What a wonderful gem is *Taqwā*!¹⁴⁷
Blessed is he who practices *Taqwā*.

Listen! The essence of Islām is *Taqwā*!
Love of God is the wine and *Taqwā* is the goblet.

Muslims! Live *Taqwā* in full;
Where is faith, if one is deficient in *Taqwā*?

This wealth, O God, You have granted me;
Glory be to Him, Who put my enemies to shame.

[Durr-e-Thamīn Urdū]

They alone are alive who are close to God;
Being accepted, they are the darling and beloved of
God.

Those who are far from *Taqwā* are far from God;
They are perpetual prisoners of their pride, haughtiness
and arrogance.

Friends! *Taqwā* means that you give up self-conceit;
Give up the habit of pride, arrogance and miserliness.

Renounce the love of this transient abode;
For that Beloved, give up the ways of luxury.

This way is the cursed way, give it up;
Or forget about (attaining closeness to) the Exalted
God.

Accept the life of hardship with utmost sincerity;
So that angels of heaven may descend upon you.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part. V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 17-18]

¹⁴⁷ *Taqwā*: Fear of God or righteousness. [Publisher]

12

ARROGANCE

I tell you truly that on the Day of Judgement, next after association of anything with God, no vice shall rank as high as arrogance. This is a vice that humiliates a person in both worlds. Divine mercy rescues every believer in Divine Unity, except an arrogant one. Satan also claimed that he believed in the Unity of God but, as he was afflicted with arrogance and looked contemptuously upon Adam whom God loved and found fault with him. He was ruined and became accursed. Thus the first sin whereby one was ruined forever was arrogance.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 598]

What is Arrogance?

I admonish my **Community** to shun arrogance as **arrogance** is hateful in the eyes of **God, the Lord of Glory**. You may not perhaps fully realize what is arrogance. Then listen to me as I speak under the direction of God.

Everyone who looks down upon a brother because he esteems himself **more learned**, or wiser, or more proficient than him is **arrogant**, inasmuch as he does not esteem God as the Fountainhead of all intelligence and knowledge and deems himself as something. Has God not the power to afflict him with lunacy and to bestow upon his brother, whom he accounts small, better intelligence and knowledge and higher proficiency than him? So **also he** who, out of a mistaken conception of his wealth, or status, or dignity, looks down upon his

brother, **is arrogant** because he forgets that his wealth, status and dignity were bestowed upon him by God. He is blind and does not realize that God has power to so afflict him that in a moment he might be reduced to the condition of the lowest of the low, and to bestow upon his brother whom he esteems low greater wealth than him. In the same way, he who takes pride in his physical health, or is conceited of his beauty, good looks, strength, or might and bestows a **scornful designation** on his brother making fun of him and proclaims his physical defects **is arrogant**, for he is unaware of God Who has power to afflict him with such physical defects as to render him worse than his brother and to bless the latter so that his faculties should not suffer decline or be stultified over a long period, for He has power to do all that He wills. Similarly, he who is neglectful of Prayer on account of his dependence upon his faculties **is arrogant** for he has not recognized the Fountainhead of all power and strength and relies upon himself. Therefore, dear ones! keep all these admonitions in mind lest you should be accounted arrogant in the estimation of God Almighty unknowingly.

He who out of pride corrects the pronunciation of a word by his brother partakes of arrogance. He who does not listen courteously to his brother and turns away from him **partakes of arrogance**. He who resents a brother sitting next to him partakes of arrogance. He who mocks and laughs at one who is occupied in Prayer partakes of arrogance. He who does not seek to render full obedience to a **Commissioned one and Messenger of God** partakes of arrogance. He who **does not pay full attention** to the directions of such a one and does not study his writings with care also partakes of arrogance. Try, therefore, that

you should not partake of arrogance in any respect so that you may escape ruin and you and yours may attain salvation. Lean towards God and love Him to the utmost degree possible and fear Him as much as anyone can be feared in this life. Be pure hearted and pure intentioned and meek and humble and free of all mischief so that you may **receive mercy**.

[Nuzūl-ul-Masīḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp. 402-403]

Do not Idolize Me

It is not my way that I should look so fierce and awe-inspiring that people should fear me as they fear a wild beast. I hate to be idolized. I have come to abolish idol worship and not to become an idol myself so that people should worship me. God Almighty knows well that I do not prefer myself to others in the slightest degree. In my estimation there is no greater idol worshipper nor anyone more wicked than an arrogant one. Such a one worships no God, he only worships himself.

[Malfūzāt, vol. II, pp. 6-7]

Remember that arrogance is allied to falsehood. The worst falsehood is that which accompanies arrogance. That is why God, the Glorious, smashes the head of an arrogant one before all others.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 599]

Forms of Arrogance and Means of Purification

It is easy for a person to discard the principal vices, but **some vices are so subtle and hidden** that one is not normally conscious of them, and even when one becomes conscious of them it is difficult to discard them. For instance, typhoid which is a severe illness and a high fever can be treated immediately with appropriate remedies,

but tuberculosis which works its mischief out of sight is very difficult of treatment. Such are these subtle and hidden vices which keep a person from achieving exalted ranks. They are moral vices which cause disruption in social life. Slight differences generate rancour, hatred, jealousy, hypocrisy and arrogance and a brother begins to look down upon a brother. If a person observes *Ṣalāt* properly for a few days and people praise him, he falls a victim to showing off, pride and self-esteem and loses that sincerity which is the true purpose of worship. If Allāh, the Glorious, bestows wealth, knowledge, high family status or honour on a person he begins to look down upon a brother who does not enjoy those advantages. If through obstinacy or enmity a person's relations with a brother are embittered he devotes himself day and night to finding fault with his brother or carries tales against him to someone in authority so that by winning the favour of the latter he might replace his brother in some office held by him, while he himself suffers from all those faults. Such are the subtle vices which are difficult to discard. Arrogance is one of them and is manifested in diverse forms. The divines suffer from it in respect of their knowledge. They are occupied all the time in finding fault with each other at the intellectual level so as to humiliate each other and to bring each other into contempt. It is very difficult to get rid of such subtle vices, but they are not tolerable under Divine law. It is not only the common people who are afflicted with them but also those who shun well known vices and are esteemed as divines and scholars and people of high degree. Deliverance from these subtle vices is like undergoing a sort of death. Until a person is delivered from the darkness of such vices he cannot achieve

complete purity of soul and cannot become worthy of those bounties and excellence that are bestowed by God Almighty on purification of the soul. Some people deem themselves as having been delivered from such moral vices, but when they are confronted with another person they are greatly roused and are not able to suppress their high notion of self-esteem and their arrogance and exhibit such a low quality of morals of which they themselves had no conception. It is at such times that it is known that they have found no deliverance from such vices and have not yet achieved any good, and that they are still far short of that purification of the soul, which is a characteristic of the righteous and is a sign of true excellence. This shows that **moral purification** is very **difficult** and cannot be achieved without the grace of Allāh, the Glorious. Such grace is also attained through the three means that have just been mentioned, namely, first, **striving and planning**; secondly, **Prayer and supplication**; and thirdly, **keeping company with the righteous**.

[Speeches, pp. 17-18]

Arrogance is an affliction that constantly affects man. Keep in mind that arrogance comes from Satan and converts an arrogant one into Satan. Until a person turns wholly away from the path of arrogance he is not enabled to accept the truth and does not become worthy of receiving Divine grace, inasmuch as arrogance bars his way. So shun every type of arrogance, whether generated by learning, wealth, status, caste, family or noble descent. These are the factors that give birth to arrogance. Until a person purifies himself of all such pride he cannot win Divine approval and become a chosen one of God. He is not bestowed such comprehension of the Divine as totally consumes the passions of self. Such pride is the

characteristic of Satan and is displeasing to God. Satan manifested such pride, conceived that he was better than Adam and claimed:

أَنَا خَيْرٌ مِنْهُ خَلَقْتَنِي مِنْ نَّارٍ وَخَلَقْتَهُ مِنْ طِينٍ¹⁴⁸

The result was that he was rejected and expelled from the presence of God.

[Speeches, p. 19]

Arrogance and mischief are evil. A slight mistake might destroy all the good achieved over a period of seventy long years. It is written of a holy man who dwelt in a mountain where no rain had fallen over a long period, that one day when rain fell over stones and rocks also, he felt that rain was needed by fields and gardens and that much of it which had fallen on stones and rocks had been wasted. It would have been of much greater benefit if it had fallen over cultivated fields. Thereupon God Almighty deprived him of all holiness. He became very sorrowful and sought help from another holy person and was told in the end that he had offended God because of his criticism.

[Malfūzāt, vol. VI, p. 57]

Arrogance is of many types. It sometimes emerges through the eye when a person looks contemptuously upon another deeming himself his superior. Sometimes it emerges through the tongue, or through the head, or through hands and feet. In short, there are many sources of arrogance and a believer should avoid all of them. He should take care that no one of his limbs should smell of arrogance or manifest it in any way.

¹⁴⁸ 'I am better than he. Thou hast created me of fire and him hast Thou created of clay.'—Şād, 38:77 [Publisher] .

The *Ṣūfis* have said that there are many types of low qualities inside a person, like evil spirits, and they continue to be expelled till the last of them is left which is arrogance. It can be expelled only by Divine grace, which is won through sincere striving and supplications.

Many persons deem themselves humble but suffer from some type of arrogance. Therefore, one must seek to avoid even the subtlest types of arrogance, which are generated sometimes by wealth, when a wealthy one deems others misers who cannot be his equals; sometimes arrogance is generated by family and caste, when a person deems himself of high caste and looks down upon others as of low caste....

Sometimes arrogance is generated by learning. A person makes a mistake in speaking and an arrogant one immediately seizes upon his mistake and shouts that he cannot utter a single word right. In short, there are diverse types of arrogance and all of them deprive a person of virtue and stand in the way of his beneficence towards his fellow beings. All of them must be shunned. But this calls for a type of death. So long as a person does not accept such a death Divine blessing does not descend upon him nor does God become responsible for him.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. VI, pp. 401-403]

What is Islām? To die for the sake of God;
And forsake all desires of self for His pleasure.

Those who accepted death are the ones who are destined to live forever;
Life is not attained in this path except through the humble acceptance of death.

Brazenness and arrogance are the characteristics of
Satan the accursed;

The true progeny of Adam are the humble.

O worm of this earth! Give up arrogance and pride;
For pride becomes the Glorious Lord alone.

Consider yourselves as worse than all;
Maybe this will help you enter the court of the Lord
God.

Give up pride and arrogance, because therein alone lies
righteousness;

Be humble as dust: therein lies the pleasure of the Lord.

The root of righteousness is humility for the sake of
God;

Virtue, which is the condition of faith, lies entirely in
Taqwā (righteousness).

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 18]

13

THINKING ILL OF OTHERS

The habit of suspiciousness and thinking ill of others is an affliction which makes a person blind and plunges him into the dark pit of ruin. It is this unfortunate trait which brought about the worship of a dead human being. It is the same trait which alienates people from the Divine attributes of creation, mercy, providence, etc., reducing God to a useless entity—God forbid. It would be no exaggeration to state that it is in consequence of this habit that the greater part, indeed the whole, of hell will be filled. Those who think ill of the Commissioned ones of God Almighty scorn His bounties and His grace.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 100]

The habit of thinking ill is a great curse which consumes faith as quickly as blazing fire consumes tinder. God becomes the enemy of him who thinks ill of God's Messengers and He stands up to fight him. He entertains such jealousy on behalf of His chosen ones, as has no equal. When I was attacked in diverse ways, the same jealousy of God was roused on my behalf.

[Al-Waṣīyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 317, footnote]

I tell you truly that the habit of thinking ill of others is a great affliction, which destroys a person's faith, flings him away from truth and rectitude, and turns friends into enemies. **In order to acquire the excellences of the truthful it is necessary that a person should altogether shun the habit of thinking ill of others,** and should he happen to fall into that

attitude concerning someone else he should seek forgiveness repeatedly and should supplicate God Almighty that he may be safeguarded against such sinfulness and the consequences that flow from it. This habit should not be underrated. **It is a dangerous disease** which destroys a person very quickly.

In short, **thinking ill of another ruins a person**. It is written that when those who are condemned to hell are brought face to face with it God Almighty would say to them: You had become guilty of thinking ill of God.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, p. 372]

The mischief starts when a person indulges in false suspicions and doubts. If a person thinks well in every situation, he is bestowed the capacity to achieve good. A mistake at the very start makes it difficult to reach the goal. Thinking ill of another is a great vice which deprives a person of many opportunities of doing good and which goes on mounting till a person begins to think ill of God Almighty.

[Malfūzāt, vol. II, p. 107]

(Urdū Couplets)

Those who cultivate the habit of suspiciousness;
Deviate too far away from the path of righteousness.

Their tongue attacks recklessly;
In an instant, it earns the displeasure of the All-
Knowing Lord.

By uttering one word, they nullify all their good deeds;
Thereafter they continue to sow the seeds of mischief.

These countrymen of ours have fallen in such deep
sleep;
That they do not wake up though we tried to wake them
hundreds of times.

All their limbs have become atrophied, rendering them
so negligent;

All their power is concentrated in their sharp tongue.

Either they indulge in foul talk, or they think ill of others;

As for the rest, they are totally unaware of the plight of Islām.

Try not to think ill of a person even though you find
him wicked;

Be fearful of the wrath of the Lord of the world.

Perhaps your own eyes might make a mistake;

Perhaps he is not bad who looks bad to you.

Maybe it is the fault of your understanding;

Maybe it is a trial from the Forgiving Lord.

As a result you courted spiritual death on account of
your suspiciousness;

And incurred the wrath of the Holy God.

If you become so shameless in your audacity;

Don't you think the word *Ittiqā* would become meaningless?

Moses too suffered embarrassment because he doubted;

Read in the Holy Qur'ān¹⁴⁹ what Khiḍr did.

Between God and His servants, there are hundreds of
thousands of secrets;

Of which you know nothing, nor is their reality evident
to you.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 18-19]

¹⁴⁹ The reference is to Al-Kahf, 18:66-83. [Translator]

14

PUNISHMENT IN THIS WORLD

It is the eternal way of God that until a disbeliever or a denier of truth becomes so bold and daring as to create the causes of his ruin with his own hands God Almighty does not destroy him by way of punishment. When the time of punishment approaches, He generates causes on account of which the decree of his destruction is recorded. This alone is the eternal law of the punishment from God and this is the way of God and unchangeable law laid down in the Book of God.

[Anwār-ul-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in , vol. 9, p. 3]

The Holy Qur'ān and other Divine scriptures disclose that the ruin and destruction imposed in this life on people as punishment are not afflicted because those people follow a wrong doctrine, for instance, because they worship idols, or planets, or fire, or some other created things or person; inasmuch as accounting for religious errors is postponed till the Judgement Day and no one is punished in this life merely on account of doctrinal errors or disbelief. The punishment for such defaults is postponed till the **hereafter**. Indeed this world is a paradise for the disbelievers and it is mostly the **believers** who suffer pain and torment in this world.

الدُّنْيَا جَنَّةُ الْكَافِرِ وَسُجْنُ الْمُؤْمِنِ¹⁵⁰

¹⁵⁰ This world is the paradise of the disbeliever and the prison of the believer. [Publisher]

Therefore, it is naturally asked that if this world is the paradise of the disbelievers, and indeed observation testifies that the disbelievers are richly endowed with wealth and the bounties of this world, and the Holy Qur'ān repeatedly announces that the disbelievers are endowed with every worldly bounty, then how is it that some disbelieving people were afflicted with torment in this world and God Almighty destroyed them with stones and storms and plagues?

Why some Disbelievers are Punished in this World

The answer is that these torments were not inflicted merely on account of disbelief, but because those people who were so afflicted and ruined had transgressed grievously in their denial of Divine Messengers and their mockery, jesting and persecution; and in the estimation of God Almighty, their mischief, wickedness, cruelty and persecution had reached extreme limits and thus they themselves created the causes of their ruin. Thereupon God's wrath was roused and they were destroyed through diverse types of chastisement. This shows that disbelief is not the cause of punishment in this world; its cause is extreme wickedness and arrogance. Such a one, even if he is a believer, when he transgresses the limits in wrongdoing, persecution and arrogance, and forgets altogether the **Majesty of God**, would draw upon himself Divine chastisement. On the other hand when a disbeliever is meek and is fearful, he would not be chastised in this world though he would be condemned to hell on account of his misguidance. This is the ancient and confirmed philosophy behind chastisement in this world and this is the way of Allāh to which all Divine books bear testimony. As the Glorious God says in the Holy

Qur'ān:

وَرَادَّآرَدْنَا أَنْ تُهْلِكَ قَرْيَةً أَمَرْنَا مُتْرَفِيهَا فَفَسَقُوا فِيهَا
فَحَقَّقْنَا عَلَيْهِمُ الْقَوْلَ فَدَمَّرْنَاهَا تَدْمِيرًا¹⁵¹

When We decide to destroy the people of a township We warn those of its dwellers who indulge in luxurious living because they transgress the limits in wickedness. Thereupon, the Divine law in respect of them is fulfilled in that their wrongdoing arrives at its climax. Then We destroy them with a severe destruction. In another verse it is said:

وَمَا كُنَّا مُهْلِكِي الْقُرَىٰ إِلَّا وَأَهْلُهَا ظَالِمُونَ¹⁵²

We have never destroyed a habitation except when its people are determined upon wrongdoing.

It should be kept in mind that though association of anything with God is also not only a wrong but an enormity, yet in this context by wrongdoing is meant such **disobedience and misconduct** as transgress the limit. For mere association of others with God which is not accompanied by persecution, arrogance, disorder, attacks upon the preachers of other religions, plans for their killing, and such extreme sinfulness whereby the fear of God is totally excluded from the hearts, the punishment is promised in the hereafter. Chastisement in this life is inflicted only at the time of extreme transgression, as it is said in another verse:

وَلَقَدْ اسْتَهْزَأُ بِرُسُلِي مِنْ قَبْلِكَ فَأَمَلَيْتُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ كَفْرًا

¹⁵¹ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:17 [Publisher]

¹⁵² Al-Qaṣaṣ, 28:60 [Publisher]

ثُمَّ أَخَذْتُهُمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ عِقَابٌ ¹⁵³

Messengers before thee were also subjected to ridicule, but We gave respite to the disbelievers who mocked, and when they reached the limits in their mockery, We seized them and people witnessed how Our chastisement overtook them.

Again it is said:

وَمَكْرُؤًا مَكَرًا وَ مَكْرُؤًا مَكَرًا وَ هُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ ¹⁵⁴

The disbelievers devised a plan for wiping out Islām, and We also devised a plan. That is to say, We let them go forward with their plans till they reached a stage of wrongdoing which, according to the way of Allāh, attracts His chastisement....

All these verses show that Divine chastisement is inflicted in this world only when a person transgresses the extreme limits in mischief, wrongdoing, arrogance, haughtiness and exaggeration. It does not happen that a disbeliever is inflicted with the lightning of Divine chastisement who is fearful in the extreme, or that a polytheist may be stoned who is terrified to death on account of his fear. God Almighty is Merciful and Compassionate to the highest degree. He seizes with punishment in this world only those who provide with their own hands the cause for such punishment.

[Anwār-ul-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in , vol. 9, pp. 14-16, footnote I]

How Wrongdoers are Punished

God Almighty deals with offenders in two ways, and offenders are of two types.

¹⁵³ Al-Ra'd, 13:33 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁴ Al-Naml, 27:51 [Publisher]

First, there are those offenders who do not transgress the limits, and though out of extreme bigotry they persist in their effort yet they do not carry their persecution to the extreme limit. These will be punished in the hereafter. God, the All-Knowing, does not seize them in this world inasmuch as their attitude is not one of severe hostility. For the punishment of sins the appointed day is the Day of Judgement.

Secondly, there are those offenders who transgress the limits in their wrongdoing and persecution and desire to rend the Messenger of God and the righteous like wild beasts and to wipe them out altogether, and to consume them like a blazing fire. With regard to such offenders who carry their wrath to the limit, the way of Allāh is that His wrath is roused against them and they are punished in this world in addition to their chastisement in the hereafter. In the idiom of the Qur'ān they are designated the *maghḍūbi-‘alaihim*¹⁵⁵.

[Toḥfah Golarviah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 213-214]

It should be kept in mind that for being delivered from afflictions it is not necessary that people should become Muslims, inasmuch as the Day of Judgement is appointed for calling people to account for their religious errors. It is, however, necessary that people should refrain from every type of misconduct and should not revile the holy Prophets of God, nor oppress the poor, and should spend freely in charity and should ascribe no equal to God, neither stone, nor fire, nor man, nor water, nor sun, nor moon and should discard the ways of arrogance and mischief.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, p. 404]

¹⁵⁵ 'Those who have incurred displeasure.' [Publisher]

Muslims should remember that though according to God's knowledge a person's end is to be in disbelief, yet it has ever been the way of God that in consequence of such a one's humble and fearful supplications his punishment is postponed. That is why the *Ahl-e-Sunnah* hold that a Divine warning of punishment is subject to change, but a Divine promise of blessing is not so subject, as, for instance, the punishment of the people of Jonas though fixed for a definite date was remitted in consequence of their humble submission. The Bible and the Holy Qur'ān are agreed that on Pharaoh's promise that he would believe, his chastisement was repeatedly postponed, though God Almighty knew that he would die a disbeliever. What is the secret behind the fact that God's design of chastisement varied in certain cases, though such variation seems inconsistent with God's warning?

The answer is that chastisement is not an integral part of Divine Will. His four basic attributes are all expressive of His bounty and beneficence. These are the four names mentioned in the first three verses of *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, namely, *Rabb-ul-‘Ālamīn*, *Raḥmān*, *Raḥīm*, and *Mālik-i-Yaum-id-Dīn*, that is, Master of the Day of Judgement.

All of these four attributes show the will of Allāh to grant nothing but favours to mankind. That is to say, to create and nourish which is called *Rubūbiyyat*, to provide out of His pure mercy without any action on man's part which is *Raḥmāniyyat*; to provide security for man against suffering and affliction in return for righteousness, fear of God and faith in Him which is *Raḥīmiyyat*; and to bestow upon His servants the abode of eternal bliss and tranquillity and happiness in consequence of righteous action like worship, fasting, *Ṣalāt*, sympathy for fellow beings, alms-giving and sacrifice, etc., which is known as

reward by the Master of the Day of Judgement. No one of these four attributes comprises a design which would harm man; they are all designed for his good. But in the case of a person who, through his misconduct and extravagant behaviour, puts himself outside the operation of these attributes, they begin to operate to his harm. For instance, *Rubūbiyyat* takes on the aspect of destruction and annihilation, and *Raḥmāniyyat* is manifested in the shape of wrath and anger, and *Raḥīmiyyat* is manifested in the shape of revenge and harshness, and the design of good recompense takes on the terrifying aspect of punishment and torment.

This change in the expressions of Divine attributes is brought about in consequence of a change in man's own condition. Thus punishment, and warning of punishment, are not comprised in the basic attributes of God, inasmuch as God's warning of punishment is not absolute so long as the person warned is alive and has the capacity to carry out a change in himself. Therefore, a change in respect of the promised chastisement is not a breach of promise. Every warning of chastisement is conditional though no condition may be expressly mentioned, except when the warning is expressed in absolute terms in which case it becomes an absolute decree and is not subject to change. This is a grand and valued principle relating to the comprehension of Divine attributes which is inherent in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 7-10 footnote]

Punishment Follows upon Misconduct

It is worthy of note that the Meccans had not merely rejected the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him). Simple rejection based on naivety does not entail punishment in this life. But when a disbeliever

transgresses beyond the limits of humanity and good behaviour and has recourse to shamelessness and abuse and designs every kind of persecution and carries it to the limit, the jealousy of God Almighty is roused and He destroys the wrongdoer out of regard for His Messenger as He destroyed the people of Noah, and the people of Lot. Such chastisement is inflicted only on account of the persecution and cruelties to which God's Messengers and their followers are subjected. Mere rejection is not punished in this life. God has reserved another world for such punishment. Chastisement in this life follows upon such rejection as is accompanied with mockery, jesting and persecution.

If a person confines himself to the position that he is unable to accept as he has not yet fully understood the matter, such denial does not attract punishment because it results from simplicity and lack of understanding. I affirm truly that if the objection of the people of Noah had been presented in a decent manner God Almighty would not have seized them. People are punished on account of their misbehaviour. God Almighty has directed that those of the enemy who should come to listen to the Holy Qur'ān should be thereafter conveyed to their place of security. There is no compulsion or coercion in Islām, as it is said:

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ¹⁵⁶

But if anyone resorts to killing or conspiring to kill, or embarks upon mischief and persecution, he is bound to be chastised.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 162-163]

¹⁵⁶ 'There should be no compulsion in religion.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:257
[Publisher]

Imposture is Punished in this World

The Holy Qur'ān repeatedly proclaims that God Almighty **does not spare one who fabricates a lie against Allāh**. He punishes such a one in this very life and destroys him; Allāh the Exalted refers to it in the verse:

قَدْ خَابَ مَنِ افْتَرَى ¹⁵⁷

That is, he who fabricates a lie shall perish.

At another place it is said:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا أَوْ كَذَّبَ بِآيَاتِهِ ¹⁵⁸

Who is guilty of greater wrong than one who fabricates a lie against God or gives the lie to His signs?

It is thus clear that those who gave the lie to the word of God on the occasion of the advent of God's Prophets were not spared by God and were destroyed by diverse types of torments. Observe what was the end of the people of Noah and of 'Ād and Thamūd and the people of Lot and of Pharaoh and the Meccan enemies of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him).

Thus when those who rejected the truth were chastised in this world, how can he escape who fabricates a lie against Allāh and who is mentioned in the first place in the verse just cited. Would God treat the righteous and the false alike and is there no punishment in this life from God Almighty for impostors?

مَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ ¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁷ Tā Hā, 20: 62 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁸ Al-An'ām, 6:22 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁹ 'What is the matter with you? How judge ye!'—Al-Qalam, 68:37 [Publisher]

At another place God Almighty has said:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا كَذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِمْ كَذِبُهُ وَإِنَّ يَكُ صَادِقًا يُصِيبُكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ
لَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي مَنْ هُوَ مُسْرِفٌ كَذَّابٌ¹⁶⁰

If this Prophet is an impostor, he will perish because of his imposture, but if he is truthful, then it is a must that you too will taste some punishment, because the transgressors, whether they are guilty of imposture or rejection, shall receive no help from Allāh.

What could be more explicit than the fact that in the Holy Qur'ān God Almighty warns again and again that an impostor is bound to perish in this very world.

[Arba'in, No. 4, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 433-434]

Our opposing *Maulavīs* are well aware that God Almighty has expressed in the Holy Qur'ān His disgust of one who fabricates lies against God, so much so that He has said concerning the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) that if he had fabricated any lies against Him, He would have severed his large artery¹⁶¹.

In short, to claim as an impostor that a person is the recipient of revelation is so heinous a sin that it incurs not only the penalty of hell but according to the conclusive verdict of the Holy Qur'ān it is punished speedily in this life also. The Mighty and Jealous God never leaves an impostor in peace. His jealousy soon crushes him and destroys him.

If the hearts of these *Maulavīs* had the slightest shade of righteousness and were they aware in the least of the ways and practice of God Almighty, they would have

¹⁶⁰ Al-Mu'min, 40:29 [Publisher]

¹⁶¹ The reference is to Al-Ḥāqqah, 69:45-47. [Translator]

known that ever since the beginning of the world there has been no single instance in which an impostor had continued with his imposture for such a long period and had added to it daily but instead of being punished, greater and greater honour among people was bestowed upon him by God Almighty, with increasing acceptance by the people, and with his tongue serving as a fountain of verities and comprehensions. It is a pity that these hypocritical *Maulavīs* do not honour the commandments and warnings of God Almighty. Can they cite a single instance from the Holy Qur'ān or from the *Aḥādīth* of an ill-natured impostor who goes on fabricating lies against God and puts himself forward as one greatly loved by God; who presents his satanic compositions deliberately as Divine revelation and proclaims that it is the Divine command that people should follow him; who falsely claims that God has revealed to him that he is the chief of the believers in this age and who falsely claims that God has told him that He has appointed him the Promised Messiah who is sent to break the cross; who claims that God has told him that his standing with God is like the Unity of God and that the people are unaware of his close relationship with Him; while all the time God knows that he is an impostor and curses him and counts him among the rejected and the humiliated? Is it then the way of God Almighty to grant a respite extending over more than twenty years to such a lying and daring impostor?

Who can reconcile himself to the fact that the Holy One, the flame of Whose wrath has always consumed impostors like lightning, should grant respite to a false one over a period of which there has been no other instance in the whole world? God, the Glorious, has said:

وَمَنْ أَظْلَمُ مِمَّنِ افْتَرَى عَلَى اللَّهِ كَذِبًا¹⁶²

Who is guilty of greater wrong than one who fabricates lies against God? Without doubt, an impostor is under the curse of God and is soon destroyed.

It is enough proof for a righteous person that God has not destroyed me like an impostor and has bestowed numberless bounties on my body and my soul. **I was young when I claimed that I was a recipient of Divine revelation and now I am old** and more than twenty years have passed since I put forward my claim. Many of my friends and dear ones who were younger than me have died, but He has bestowed a long life on me and has been my Helper in every difficult situation. Are these the insignia of those who fabricate lies against God?

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 49-51]

False Prophets are not Granted Respite

It is a Divine law that God does not grant respite to a false prophet. Such a one is soon seized and suffers his punishment. In view of this we shall honour and accept as true all those who claimed to be prophets at any time, whose claim was established and whose religion became widespread and was established and flourished over a long period. If we should discover mistakes in the scriptures of their religions or should observe the misconduct of their followers we should not attribute these defaults and shortcomings to the founders of those religions, inasmuch as the perversion of scriptures is possible and it is possible that mistakes of interpretation might find their way into the commentaries, but it is not

¹⁶² Al-An'ām, 6:22 [Publisher]

at all possible that a person should fabricate lies against God and should claim to be a prophet and should put forward his own compositions as the word of God falsely and yet God should grant him respite like the righteous and should bestow upon him wide acceptance by people.

[Toḥfah Qaiṣariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, p. 258]

Has an impostor ever been granted respite for the propagation of his lies as God Almighty grants to the true recipients of His revelation? Has God not affirmed that false claimants of revelation and impostors would be seized? The Torah affirms that a false prophet shall be slain and the Gospel sets out that an impostor would soon perish and his followers would be scattered. Is there a single instance that a false claimant of revelation should have been granted respite over a period which has been granted to me since the publication of my claim of being the recipient of Divine revelation? If there is any such instance then let it be put forward. I **claim** emphatically that there has been no single instance of it since the beginning of the world. **Is there anyone** who should fear God Almighty and derive benefit from this firm and conclusive reasoning? I do not claim that an idol worshipper or an atheist or a claimant of Godhood is not granted long life, because these errors and such misguidance would be punished in the hereafter. But I do affirm that he who falsely poses as the recipient of Divine revelation is soon seized and his life is cut short. The Torah, the Gospel and the Holy Qur'ān bear witness to this and so does reason. An opponent cannot set forth a single instance to the contrary from history.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 267-268]

15

THE SOUL

The Āryās believe that *Permishwar* has created no soul and that all souls are eternal and uncreated. They also hold that man cannot attain eternal salvation, that after having been accommodated in the house of salvation for a period he is expelled therefrom and is returned once more to the earth. Both these doctrines are open to objection. The first one negatives the Unity of God Almighty, and indeed His very Godhood altogether. The second doctrine bears with undue harshness upon a faithful servant of God.

To explain it in detail, if all souls and all the particles of matter are deemed to be eternal and uncreated such a notion would generate many evils. For instance, in such a case no argument whatsoever can be advanced to establish the existence of God. If all souls and all particles are self-existing there would be no need for a creator merely for the purpose of bringing them together. An atheist can object that if everything is self-existing and uncreated what need is there for a *Permishwar* for the mere purpose of putting them together.

Another evil that would be generated by such a doctrine would be that it would deprive God of His very Godhood. Those who have knowledge of psychology and of the properties of the souls well understand that the wonderful properties with which the souls are invested are not created merely by bringing them together with the

particles of matter. For instance, the souls possess a faculty whereby they can, through proper striving, gain knowledge of hidden things; so also they possess a faculty of reasoning by the exercise of which they can gain knowledge of intellectual matters; and they also possess the faculty of love by virtue of which they incline towards God. If all these faculties were to be deemed to exist without any creator this would be a grave affront to *Permeshwar*, as it would mean that the great and the high is self-existing and that the lowly and the inferior was left to be created by *Permeshwar*. It would have to be acknowledged that the self-existing wonderful faculties and qualities of the soul are far superior to the works of *Permeshwar*, so much so that *Permeshwar* himself is astonished at them. Thus this doctrine would seriously damage the Godhood of the god of the Āryās so that His existence would make no difference, and no argument would be available for upholding his existence. Moreover, He would cease to be the source of all grace. His function would only be a lowly one, and with regard to all the high wonderful performances of the souls it would have to be acknowledged that they are self-existent.

Every sensible person would realize that if such is the reality, then even if the existence of *Permeshwar* is acknowledged, he would be a weak and useless entity, the existence or non-existence of which would be equal, so much so that even if he were supposed to die it would not detract anything from the souls. Nor would any soul be bound to worship him as every soul can retort: ‘As you have not created me, nor is it you who have invested me with my faculties and powers and capacities, then by what right can you demand that I should worship you?’

Besides, as *Permashwar* is not the creator of souls he cannot comprehend them and thus there would be a veil between *Permashwar* and souls, and *Permashwar* would not have full knowledge and full power over the unseen, and as he would not have full power His Godhood would be upset and he would cease to exist.

The Soul is Created out of Nothing by the Command of Allāh

It is obvious that full and perfect knowledge of something imports the power of fashioning that thing. That is why the philosophers have said that perfect knowledge becomes perfect action. So the question naturally arises, has *Permashwar* full knowledge of the qualities and properties of souls? If he has full and perfect knowledge of all this, then how is it that despite such knowledge he is not able to create similar souls? This would mean not only that *Permashwar* has not the power to create souls but also that he does not have full knowledge about them.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 139-141]

The Vedās present God as Imperfect

The Vedās of the Āryās put forward a concept of God which is bound to repel a seeker after truth. The Āryās do not hold their *Permashwar* as the source of his own kingdom but conceive that he has been given his kingdom by chance or good luck; that is to say, that by good luck he found a number of souls and particles and he compounded a world out of them. It is possible that there may be another store of souls and particles hidden somewhere of which *Permashwar* has yet no knowledge. Is this a doctrine which is consistent with the Majesty, Power and Greatness of Allāh, the Glorious?

God Almighty is the Perfect Being, Who is the Source of all grace, the Fountainhead of all lights, the Sustainer of all things, Who comprises all excellence, is comprehensive of all good qualities, and is entirely free from all weaknesses, defects, and dependence upon anything else. Reflection would show that by subscribing to the doctrine that souls and bodies are uncreated and self-existent all perfect Divine attributes would be abolished and nothing would survive of Godhood.

A person of average intelligence can comprehend that the Unity of God Almighty means that His Being alone is the reality, and that everything else has proceeded from Him, subsists only through Him, and arrives at its perfection only by His grace. But alas! the theology of the Āryās teaches the contrary. Their books are full of their false claims that they themselves are also eternal and uncreated like *Permeshwar* and have a resemblance to him and are their own gods. They do not reflect that if they are eternal and self-existent and self-created, then resembling god in these respects, how did they agree to submit to him and who intervened to bring about this relationship between them?

Even a boy can comprehend that if souls and bodies are eternal and self-existent, and are their own gods, *Permeshwar* cannot claim that He is their Lord and Creator. If they have not come into existence by the hand of *Permeshwar* how can he be their lord and master? For instance, if a child were to drop full-fledged from the sky, or should be born automatically from the earth, no woman would be entitled to claim it as her child. Her child can only be the one who is born of her womb. Thus he alone belongs to God who is brought into being by Him, and he who does not come into being in that

manner can in no wise be His. No righteous and decent person takes possession of that which is not his, then how did the *Permeshwar* of the *Āryās* take possession of that to which he had no right? How hateful and inconsistent with truth is the doctrine which deprives the Lord and Master of the universe of His creation and bereaves Him of the true reality of Godhood.

[*Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 2, pp. 144-146]

Allāh can Create out of Nothing

Some *Āryā Samājists* seek to support the notion of the souls being uncreated and their own gods with the argument that if souls were not existent at one time and came into existence by being created by God Almighty, this would mean creation out of non-existence and creation out of nothing is so incomprehensible a phenomenon that no sensible person can accept it. I would point out that people afflicted with false and defective reason do not believe even in God Almighty Himself, but a person possessing sane reason who believes in God is bound to believe in all His attributes which are the basis of His Godhead. He who believes in the essential attributes of God Almighty, that He is All-Powerful Whose power is subject to no limitation, will not dare to seek to measure His Power with his own defective reason and will not impose any limitation upon the powers of the Infinite God. Moreover, when a wise person perceives that God Almighty is in His Being comprehensive of the greatest wonders and is exalted beyond imagination, Who sees without eyes, hears without ears, speaks without a tongue, and without the help of builders, labourers, carpenters, instruments of architecture, and stores of bricks and stones, etc., can create heaven and earth in one moment by His mere design and order, he

would have no hesitation in believing that such an All-Powerful God can create out of nothing. That is Godhood and that is why He is called Almighty, All-Powerful and Master of unlimited capacities.

If His works were to be dependent, like the works of man, upon means, resources, and time, then what would be His Godhood and how would it operate? Are not all His works beyond the reach of reason? Are not His wonders such that human reason falls short of them? Then what kind of stupidity is it to take exception to that which is the basis and reality of His Godhood.

What kind of *Permeshwar* would he be who should command that which he designs: ‘Be’, and nothing should happen. God is the name of that Possessor of wonderful powers Whose design accomplishes everything. When He commands that which He designs: ‘Be’, it comes into being at once by virtue of His perfect Power. It is a most subtle mystery that the **entire creation are the words of God**. When the Christians out of their stupidity began to affirm that Jesus was a word of God, that is to say his soul was a Divine word which had taken the shape of his soul, God Almighty affirmed the truth that there is no soul that is not the word of God and has not come into being by the mere command of God. This is indicated by:

¹⁶³ قُلِ الرُّؤُوسُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي

That the word of God became manifest in the shape of souls and other creation is a subtle Divine mystery which no human reason can penetrate. It has been revealed by

¹⁶³ ‘Say: The soul is by the command of my Lord.’—Banī Isrā’īl, 17:86 [Publisher]

the Divine Light of God's Holy Word. If it is not believed that God Almighty manifests souls and bodies by His word and command it would have to be acknowledged that unless souls and bodies become available from outside, *Permashwar* can do nothing. But can *Permashwar* be such a bankrupt and empty handed being, the whole of whose godhood is dependent upon a chance occurrence? If such is *Permashwar* all hope is vain and it would be a source of danger to rely on him.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 163-165]

The Holy Qur'an affirms that souls are not self-existent and uncreated. They are created through a special union between two kinds of seminal seeds, and in the case of the smaller insects through only one type of matter. This is the truth which is confirmed by observation and which brooks no contradiction. It is folly to deny perceptible realities. When we say that the soul comes into being out of nothing it does not mean that before its coming into being it was nothing. It means that there was no pre-existing matter out of which man could extract the soul by his own power, and that Divine power and wisdom alone produce the soul out of some matter. This is why when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was asked: What is the soul?, he was commanded by God to respond that the soul has been created by the command of my Lord. The verse of the Holy Qur'an pertaining to it is:

يَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي
وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا¹⁶⁴

That is they enquire of thee what is soul and how is it

¹⁶⁴ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:86 [Publisher]

created? Tell them: The soul is created by the command of my Lord. That is, the creation of the soul is a mystery of creation of which you have little knowledge; meaning that your knowledge is confined only to the birth of the soul; as we observe that insects, etc., come into being under our observation from some matter.

The birth of the human soul takes place under a Divine law whereby when a framework is prepared gradually from the union of two seminal fluids. Then, as by the mixture of certain medicines a certain quality is generated in the compound which the elements thereof did not individually possess, in the same way a special quality is generated in the framework which is compounded of blood and sperm drops and it takes on the colour of a type of phosphorous. When the breeze of the Divine manifestation blows upon it under the command: 'Be', it suddenly flares up and spreads its effect into all parts of the framework. Thereby the embryo comes alive. This very thing which blazes up within the embryo by Divine manifestation is the soul and the same is the word of God. This process is described as the command of God because the faculty of the pregnant mother, which creates all the limbs of the embryo by the command of God and weaves its framework like the net of the spider, has no concern with the soul which is created by a special Divine manifestation. Though the phosphorous out of which the soul takes birth is produced by the framework, the spiritual spark which is called the soul cannot be born without the touch of the heavenly breeze. This is the true knowledge that the Holy Qur'ān has furnished to us. It is beyond the reach of the reason of the philosophers.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 158-160]

The Soul is the Creation of God

The whole basis of **salvation is the personal love of God Almighty**, which is the name of the love generated by God Almighty in the very nature of the human soul. If the soul is not the creation of *Permeshwar* how can it have natural love for him? When and by what means did *Permeshwar* place his love with his own hand in the nature of the soul? But that is not possible, for natural love means the love which is inherent in the nature of the soul and is not added afterwards. This is indicated in the Holy Qur’ān, where it is said:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۖ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ¹⁶⁵

I enquired from the human souls, “Am I not your Lord?” and they responded: “Yes, indeed.”

This means that the human soul bears inherent testimony that God is its Creator. Thus the soul naturally loves its Creator as it has been created by Him.

This is also indicated in another verse where Allāh the Exalted says:

فَطَرَتِ اللَّهُ الْبَاطِنِ فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا¹⁶⁶

It is part of human nature for the soul to yearn for the One and Only God Who has no partner and not to content without communion with Him. In other words, God has invested the human soul with the yearning that it can find no comfort or serenity except in its meeting with God.

Thus if the human soul is invested with this desire it must

¹⁶⁵ Al-A‘rāf, 7:173 [Publisher]

¹⁶⁶ Al-Rūm, 30:31 [Publisher]

be acknowledged that the soul is the creation of God Who has invested it with this desire. It is a verity that the human soul is so invested, which proves that it is truly the creation of God.

[Chashma Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 363-364]

The Holy Qur'ān has set forth many conclusive reasons in support of the verity that souls are the creation of God. We set out briefly a few of them by way of illustration.

First: It is obvious that all souls are at all times subordinate to and subject to the command of God Almighty, and there is no other cause for such subordination except that they are the creation of God.

Second: It is also obvious that all souls are limited in their capacities and powers, as is proved by the diversity of the spiritual conditions and capacities of sections of mankind. This limitation must be imposed by a Limitor, which proves that souls are created.

Third: It needs no argument to establish that all souls are, for the purpose of their perfection and survival, dependent upon and in need of a Being Who should be Perfect, All-Powerful, All-Knowing and an Absolute Benefactor. This proves that they are created.

Fourth: A moment's reflection would show that our souls comprise briefly all the wisdom and the creative skill that are demonstrated in the heavenly and the earthly bodies. That is why the universe on account of its diverse elements is known as the macrocosm and man is called a microcosm. Thus when the universe, on account of its wonderful qualities, is accounted the work of a Wise Creator, how would that not be the creation of God which on account of its personal wonders is a reflection of the whole universe and comprises within itself the

wonderful qualities of all the units of the universe and illustrates the consummate wisdom of God Almighty?

That which is a manifestation of all the wonders of Divine attributes cannot be outside God's creation. Indeed it bears the seal of creation more than anything else and is a greater proof of the existence of the Creator. This is not only a theoretical proof of the soul being created but is a bright verity. Moreover, other things have no consciousness of their being created but souls are by their very nature conscious of having been created. Even the soul of a savage cannot reconcile itself to being self-existent. This is indicated by the verse which says that:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ ۚ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ¹⁶⁷

That is, I enquired of the souls "Am I not your Creator?" They responded: "Yes, indeed."

This dialogue indicates the natural relationship between the Creator and His creation, the proof of which is inherent in the nature of souls.

Fifth: As a child partakes somewhat of the features and character of his parents, in the same way souls, which have proceeded from the hand of God Almighty, partake somewhat of the character and qualities of their Creator. Though in cases in which the darkness and heedlessness of being created prevails over some souls the Divine colour appears somewhat faded, yet it cannot be denied that every soul possesses that colour to some degree. In some cases that colour appears unattractive on account of misuse, but that is not the fault of the colour, it is the fault of the use to which it is put. None of man's faculties

¹⁶⁷ Al-A'raf, 7:173 [Publisher]

or powers is evil. It is misuse that makes them appear evil. Every faculty employed on its proper occasion is wholly good and beneficent, and in truth all the faculties that are bestowed on man are a reflection of Divine powers. As a son exhibits some features of his father, in the same way our souls reflect the features and qualities of Divinity which are easily recognized by those who possess comprehension. As a son has natural love for his father, we, who are from God, have natural love for Him. If our souls had not a natural relationship with God those who seek Him would have had no means of reaching Him.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 167-169]

In the Holy Qur'ān, God says:

أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ¹⁶⁸

I enquired of the souls “Am I not your Creator?” They responded: “Yes, indeed.”

This means that souls naturally affirm the existence of a Creator, though some people falling in the darkness of heedlessness and being influenced by wrong teachings become atheists or Āryās and deny their Creator contrary to their nature. It is obvious that everyone loves his parents, so much so that some children suffer death in consequence of the death of their mother. Then if souls are not God's creation who has invested them with natural love for God, how is it that when a person achieves full consciousness his heart is drawn to God and his bosom is flooded with the love of God? There must be some relationship between God and souls which

¹⁶⁸ Al-A'rāf, 7:173 [Publisher]

makes them fall madly in love with God. They become so devoted to God that they are ready to sacrifice everything for His sake. It is truly a wonderful relationship which is far above one's relationship with father and mother.

If souls are self-existent, as is alleged by the Āryās, then how has this relationship been established and who has invested souls with the faculty of love for and devotion to God? This is worthy of reflection and is the key to true comprehension.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, p. 167]

As God has called man to Himself, He has invested him in advance with faculties suited to worship and love. These faculties that are bestowed by God hear His voice. As God desired that man should develop comprehension of God, He invested the human soul with the faculty of comprehension in advance, for if it had not been so man would have lacked comprehension of God. Whatever the human soul possesses is from God and is a reflection of Divine qualities. No one of those qualities is evil, their misuse makes them evil. Someone may object that man suffers from evil qualities like envy or rancour, etc., which cannot be bestowed by God. The truth is, as we have already stated, that all human qualities are a reflection of Divine qualities, as the human soul is from God, but excess or misuse gives them a repulsive appearance in men. For instance, envy is a repulsive quality whereby a person desires that another may be deprived of a bounty and it might be bestowed upon him, but at bottom envy means only that a man does not desire that another one should be his partner in any excellence that he has acquired. In its essence this is a Divine quality by virtue of which God is One without associate. The misuse of

this quality makes it repulsive; however, it is not evil for a person to wish to outstrip all others in virtue and to desire to achieve spiritual uniqueness.

[Nasīm-e-Da‘wat, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 19, pp. 389-390]

A Soul Bereft of its Qualities is Dead

It may be said that if the soul is created it would follow that it is mortal in the sense that a condition in which something is bereft of its qualities may be described as death. When a medicine loses all its effect it may be described as dead. In certain circumstances the soul is bereft of its qualities and undergoes even greater changes than the body. At such times it can be said that it has died, inasmuch as when anything gives up all its essential qualities it is described as dead. That is why in the Holy Qur’ān only those human souls have been described as being alive after their departure from this life which retain those essential qualities which are the purpose of their creation, that is to say, perfect love of and perfect obedience to God Almighty which is the life of the soul. When a soul departs this life full of the love of God and having devoted itself to Him, it is alive and all other souls are dead. A soul bereaved of its qualities is dead. During sleep both the body and the soul die, that is to say, they are bereft of the qualities that they possess during wakefulness and suffer a sort of death, inasmuch as anything that is bereft of its qualities cannot be described as being alive. **Death does not only mean non-existence; being bereft of essential qualities is also a sort of death.** For instance, when a body dies its material still survives. In the same way the death of the soul means that it has been bereft of its qualities, as happens during sleep, when both the body and the soul

are bereft of the qualities that they possess during waking hours. For instance, the soul of a living person meets a dead person in a dream and does not know that that person had died. It forgets this life altogether as it sinks into sleep, and discarding its garment of life puts on a new garment forgetting all its knowledge and all its memories of the world except that much as God may keep alive. It suspends all its activities and truly arrives before God. All its movements and words and emotions pass under the control of God Almighty. It loses all choice and it cannot be said that anything that it does or says or hears in a dream is by its own choice. It exhibits all the signs of death. During sleep the soul suffers an even greater death than does the body. If people were to reflect upon their condition during sleep they would realize that if the soul had been exempt from death it would have continued to enjoy that exemption in sleep also. Our condition during sleep is a mirror for the purpose of our comprehension of our condition in death. He who seeks true comprehension of the soul should reflect deeply on his condition during sleep. Every mystery of death can be resolved through one's experiences during sleep. If you will reflect deeply on the mysteries of sleep and dreams and will contemplate how the soul suffers a sort of death during sleep when it is bereft of its knowledge and qualities, you will realize that death has a great resemblance to sleep. Thus it is not true that after its separation from the body the soul continues in the condition which it enjoyed in this life. Under God's command it suffers the same kind of death which it had experienced in sleep, only that condition is intenser than its condition in sleep and every one of its qualities is reduced to nothing. That is the death of the soul. Thereaf-

ter those alone are revived who used to work for life.

No soul possesses the capacity to continue alive on its own. Have you the capacity to control your qualities and circumstances and knowledge during sleep as you are capable of doing in your waking hours? As soon as you sink into sleep your soul undergoes a change and suffers a type of non-existence whereby God Almighty has said about the soul in the Holy Qur'ān:

اللَّهُ يَتَوَفَّى الْأَنفُسَ حِينَ مَوْتِهَا وَالَّتِي لَمْ تَمُتْ فِي مَنَامِهَا فَيُمْسِكُ
الَّتِي قَضَىٰ عَلَيْهَا الْمَوْتَ وَيُرْسِلُ الْأُخْرَىٰ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى ۚ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ
لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ¹⁶⁹

(Part Number 24, Sūrah Al-Zumar)

This means that at the time of death the souls pass wholly under the control of God and lose all choice and self-consciousness. That is to say, they are deprived of the qualities of life and become as if they were non-existent. Such of them as do not die in fact, but pass into a condition resembling death in a state of sleep, also pass under the control of God Almighty and undergo a change in which they lose all worldly consciousness and feeling. Thus, both in death and during sleep, God takes possession of the soul in such manner that it loses all choice and consciousness which are the signs of life. Then such souls upon whom death has in fact been imposed are retained by God, so that they cannot return to the world, and He restores to the world those souls upon whom death is not imposed. In this phenomenon there are signs for those who reflect.

This verse shows that the soul undergoes death as well as

¹⁶⁹ Al-Zumar, 39:43 [Publisher]

the body. But the Holy Qur'ān indicates that the souls of the righteous are revived within a short period—some after three days, some after a week, and some after forty days—after death and are bestowed a second life of comfort and ease and delight. That is the life for the achievement of which the righteous servants of God approach Him with the utmost sincerity and put forth all their effort in order to emerge from the darkness of their egos and adopt a hard mode of life in the search of God's pleasure, so much so that this condition resembles death. As the verse cited above indicates, there is a death for the soul as there is for the body, though the hidden circumstances of that state do not become manifest in this dark world. Yet the state of dreams is an illustration of that state which resembles the state of death of the soul in this world. It is our experience that as soon as we sink into sleep all the qualities of our soul are upset and we forget our waking hours and our spiritual qualities, and all the knowledge that our soul possesses becomes non-existent. We experience such scenes in our dreams as show that our soul has lost all the qualities that it possessed in wakefulness and has become something very different. This condition resembles death and is indeed a sort of death. This shows conclusively that the death which is imposed upon the soul with the death of the body resembles the death which the soul experiences in sleep but is very much heavier.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 160-164]

The doctrine which the Qur'ān teaches is that as God has created the soul He also has power to make it non-existent, and that the human soul is bestowed immortality by the bounty and grace of God, and not on account of any inherent quality of its own. That is why those who

develop the utmost love for God and obey Him absolutely and prostrate themselves at His threshold in full sincerity and devotion are specially bestowed a perfect life; their natural senses are sharpened and their natures are invested with a light whereby they experience an extraordinary upsurge of spirituality and all the spiritual powers that they possessed in this world are vastly expanded after death. Moreover, on account of their God-given relationship with Him, they are exalted to heaven which exaltation in the idiom of the law of Islām is designated *rafa'a*. But those who do not believe, and have not a relationship with God, are not bestowed such life nor are they invested with these qualities. They are like the dead. Therefore, had God Almighty not been the Creator of souls He could not have exhibited this distinction between believer and non-believer through His powerful control.

[Chashma Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 372, footnote]

QUESTION: The Mirzā Ṣāḥib and all Muslims believe, and the Qur'ān affirms, that when Holy Prophet (Muḥammad^{saw}) was asked about the souls he could not tell them anything and received the revelation: "Tell them, the soul is God's command." Thus the Muslims could not have gathered anything from this reply, nor was even their guide enlightened about the soul. What response was furnished by God in the affirmation that the soul is a command of the Lord? Are not all other things also the command of the Lord?

ANSWER: How long shall I continue to correct your mistakes? From whom have you heard that the Muslims believe that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) was not bestowed by God Almighty any knowledge about the soul, and where have you read

in the Holy Qur'ān that he was unaware of anything concerning the soul? I realize that you have, on account of your defective intelligence, been misled in your interpretation of the following verse of the Holy Qur'ān:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا¹⁷⁰

(Part Number 15, Sūrah Banī Isrā'īl)

(O Muḥammad) the disbelievers enquire of thee about the soul, as to how and from what it has been created. Tell them: The soul is by the command of my Lord and you O disbelievers have been bestowed but little knowledge about the soul and Divine mysteries.

You have on account of your lack of intelligence fallen into the error of thinking that it was the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) who was told that he had little knowledge about the soul. The context and the use of the plural pronoun make it clear that this admonition was addressed to the disbelievers....

The fact is that a company of the disbelievers enquired from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) about the soul. This company of disbelievers was told that the soul is by the command of Allāh, that is to say, it is a word of Allāh or a reflection of it which, through the wisdom and power of God, manifests itself as the soul. It does not partake of Godhood but is created and is a servant of God. This is a subtle secret of Divine power of which you disbelievers have only a little perception, on account of which you are invited to have faith and to exercise your understanding....

The statement that the soul is by the command of the

¹⁷⁰ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:86 [Publisher]

Lord comprises a grand verity to which, in your haste, you have taken objection. The explanation of it is that the providence of God brings that which is non-existent into existence in two ways, and that which is brought into existence is designated differently according to the way whereby it is created. When God Almighty creates something out of non-existence such creation is called *Amr* (command) in the idiom of the Qur'ān, and that which is produced out of a previous form of existence is named *Khalq* (creation). In other words, the creation of an element out of non-existence is *Amr* and the production of a compound out of some previous form or shape is *Khalq*, as it is said in the Holy Qur'ān:

أَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ الْخَلْقُ وَالْأَمْرُ¹⁷¹

That is to say, the creation of elements out of non-existence and the manifestation of compounds both belong to God and elements and compounds are both God's creation.

Observe, therefore, how succinctly the Holy Qur'ān has expounded a high and excellent verity within a brief verse. In contrast, the more you reflect on the doctrine of the Vedās the more you will feel embarrassed.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 171-177]

I tell you truly, without the least exaggeration, that the Holy Qur'ān has expounded the qualities, faculties, powers, capacities and other wonderful particulars of the soul in such a true, clear, fine and excellent manner, and has furnished proofs of these, that it constitutes a high and fine statement, so full of wisdom comprising perfect verities that if all the four Rishīs who compiled the Vedās

¹⁷¹ Al-A'rāf, 7:55 [Publisher]

were to be born again and were to exert their thinking and reflection to the utmost they would not be able to achieve that degree of vastness of knowledge and high insights even if they expired in the effort.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, p. 234]

Qualities of the Soul

The Holy Qur'ān has made detailed mention of the many qualities, wonderful powers and capacities of souls of which we set out a few by way of illustration:

1. The faculty of eagerness to acquire knowledge and insight.
2. The faculty of acquiring knowledge.
3. The faculty of safeguarding knowledge that has been acquired.
4. The faculty of the love of God.
5. The faculty of deriving delight from a meeting with the Divine.
6. The faculty of seeing visions.
7. The faculty of influencing and being influenced.
8. The faculty of establishing relationship with bodies.
9. The faculty of acquiring divine qualities.
10. The faculty of receiving revelation.
11. The faculty of expansive and constricted moods.
12. The faculty of acquiring unlimited comprehension.
13. The faculty of taking on the colour of the manifestation of the Divine.
14. The faculty of reason whereby to distinguish between beauty and imperfection.
15. The faculty of receiving impressions and being influenced by them in contrast with the bodies to which

they are related.

16. The faculty of acknowledging the existence of the True Creator.
17. The faculty of manifesting new qualities in combination with bodies and their special shapes.
18. The faculty of mutual attraction which might be designated magnetic power.
19. The faculty of immortality.
20. The faculty of maintaining a special relationship with the particles of the departed body which is manifested to those who have experience of visions.

There are many other faculties of souls which are set out in detail in the Holy Qur'ān in a delightful and excellent manner.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 245-247]

The Doctrine of Transmigration is False

There is no other doctrine as false as the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, inasmuch as its basis is false, its falsehood is established by observation; a sense of human purity condemns it; and it is the duty of every godly person to condemn it on account of its repudiation of Divine power.

Its basis is false as it is stated in the *Satyārath Prakāsh* that the soul falls like dew on some vegetable which is eaten by a woman and thus finds its way to the womb. But this involves that a soul falls in two pieces upon the earth of which, by some chance, the husband eats one and the wife eats the other; because, it is well settled that a child derives spiritual faculties and qualities from both parents and not only from one of them. Therefore, it is necessary that both should have partaken of the vegetable

upon which the soul had fallen and it is not enough that only one should have partaken of it. This necessitates the division of the soul which is false. Therefore, the basis of the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is false.

Observation demonstrates its falseness as there is a large diversity of souls and it is not possible that they should all have been brought into existence like the falling of the dew. For instance, we often observe that lice abound in the hair of some people. With what dew are these souls swallowed? Also, stores of wheat are infested with millions of insects. How do their souls descend like dew, and who swallows them? We also know that some people suffer from worms in their intestines or in their brains, and there are thousands of germs in a drop of water. By what kind of dew are they created? Experience shows that everything is infested with germs. Silk and wood and grain and fruits of different sorts are all liable to be infested with worms and insects. How are they produced?...

Imagine how offensive the doctrine of the transmigration of souls is from the point of view of decency! When a female infant is born, does she bring with her a list of relationships that she is the mother or grandmother or sister of such and such person and that she should avoid marriage with them?

This doctrine also seriously detracts from the omnipotence of the *Permashwar*. God is All-Powerful and may if He so wills invest a piece of wood with life, as was the case, for instance, with the rod of Moses which was a piece of wood at one moment and became a serpent the next. If, however, souls are self-existent the *Permashwar* of the Hindūs cannot maintain his status as God, inas-

much as he who exercises his godhood with the help of others would cease to be God sooner than later. The affirmation that the system of transmigration of souls, which has been in operation according to the Āryās for millions of years, results from the sins committed in a previous existence is proved to be crude, absurd and false in the light of natural sciences. It is obvious that there is a Divine system of the birth of souls which remains constant. For instance, millions of insects appear in the rainy season and flies abound in the summer. Then are we to assume that sinfulness abounds in these seasons so that large numbers of human beings are transmuted into flies and insects on account of the multiplicity of their sins? There are thousands of other reasons by virtue of which this doctrine must be held to be false.

[Nasīm-e-Da'wat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 441-444, footnote]

Birth of the Soul

It is absolutely true that the soul is a fine light which is developed inside the body and is nurtured in the womb. In the beginning it is hidden and imperceptible, and later it is made manifest; but from the very beginning its essence is present in the sperm. It is related to the sperm in a mysterious manner by the design and command and will of God. It is a bright and illumined quality of the sperm. It cannot be said that it is a part of the sperm as matter is part of matter, nor can it be said that it comes from outside, or falls upon the earth and gets mixed with the sperm. It is latent in the sperm as fire is latent in the flint. The Word of God does not mean that the soul descends from heaven as a separate entity, or falls upon the earth from the atmosphere and then by chance gets mixed with the sperm and enters the womb with it. There is no basis for such a notion. The law of nature rejects it.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 322-323]

There is conclusive evidence that the male and female sperm have the capacity to generate the soul without its falling from heaven like the dew. When the two sperms unite the capacity is strengthened and grows till when the framework of the embryo is ready the soul is activated from the framework by the power of God Almighty. This is the creation of something from non-existence, because the soul is not anything material and yet it is generated from the same matter which grows into a framework after the union of the two sperms in the womb. It is not necessary that the soul should fall like dew on some vegetable and should be generated in this manner. The matter from which the soul is generated can be formed out of a piece of meat or fish, or from clay from the depths of the earth from which frogs and insects are generated. Undoubtedly it is a Divine mystery that He creates from the body something which has nothing of the body in it. It is clear that the soul does not fall from heaven but is a new creation which is produced from the compound sperms by the Power of God as Almighty Allāh says in the Holy Qur'ān:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ، فَتَبَرَّكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ¹⁷²

That is to say, when the human framework is ready in the womb God completes it with a new creation, meaning the soul is created out of the matter from which the framework was prepared.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 123-124]

¹⁷² Al-Mu'minūn 23:15 [Publisher]

Body and Spirit are Continuously Renewed

It has been proved that in three years the human body is dissolved and a new body takes its place. It is a familiar spectacle that when a person becomes very weak from illness and becomes like a mere skeleton, on his return to health gradually the body is rebuilt. Thus all the time the particles of the body are being dissolved and replaced by new particles. Thus the body suffers death every moment and obtains new life. Like the body, the soul also dies every moment and is revived. The only difference is that the changes in the body are patent and can be observed, but as the soul is hidden its changes are also hidden and are endless. The Holy Qur'ān indicates that the changes of the soul are unlimited and will continue even in heaven. They will be indicative of progress and the souls will experience a continuous growth, each succeeding condition will be so far above the preceding condition that it would seem as if the preceding condition had died.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 167-168]

Body is the Mother of the Soul

Physical injuries disclose that there is a mysterious relationship between the soul and the body which is beyond the ken of man. A further proof of this relationship is that reflection shows that the body is the mother of the soul. The soul does not fall into the womb of a pregnant woman from above. It is a light that is inherent in the sperm which begins to shine forth with the development of the embryo. The Holy Word of God Almighty sets forth that the soul is generated by the framework which is prepared in the womb from the sperm, as He says in the Holy Qur'ān:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ، فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ¹⁷³

Then We invest the embryo which originated in the womb with a new birth, and thus give it yet another form which is known as the soul. So blessed is Allāh, and He is the Creator Who has no equal.

This process is a deep mystery which points to the real nature of the soul and indicates the strong relationship that subsists between the soul and the body.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, p. 321]

Relationship of the Soul with Graves

QUESTION: What is the nature of the relationship between the soul and the grave?

ANSWER: Whatever has been said on this subject in the *Aḥādīth* of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is entirely true. It is not for us to probe into its nature. All that we have to establish is that there is such a relationship and that it is not an impossibility.

It is illustrated by an instance in the law of nature. God Almighty has appointed different methods for the discovery of the **reality of things**. Some are perceived through the eye, others through the ear and some through a combination of the senses. There are many verities which can be perceived only by the heart.... Man is equipped with many faculties and each of them performs diverse functions in the service of man.

The ignorant philosopher seeks to decide everything on the basis of his defective reason, but this is a mistake. Historical events can be gathered only from history. The

¹⁷³ Al-Mu'minūn, 23:15 [Publisher]

natural qualities of things can only be determined through correct experience. Reason is a guide only in respect of inductive matters. Thus there are diverse methods of arriving at the reality. Man is misled when he depends only on one method for the determination of diverse matters. We have experience of it every day. The departure of the soul from the body, or the relationship of the soul with the body are matters which cannot be determined by reason. Had that been possible philosophers and thinkers would not have fallen into error. Thus the relationship of the soul with the grave is a verity, but it cannot be perceived by the physical eye. It can be perceived only through the **eye of vision**. It cannot be perceived by mere reason, for reason cannot determine even the existence of the soul. This matter is the subject of a thousand contentions and there are thousands of atheistic philosophers who deny the existence of the soul. Had it been a matter of pure reason there should have been no difference.

The function of the eye, for instance, is to see and we cannot expect that the eye of X should behold a white object and the eye of Y should determine the taste of that **white object**. Mere reason cannot determine for certain even the existence of the soul let alone its nature and its relationships. Philosophers consider the soul to be like a green piece of wood. To them the soul has no external or independent existence. Whatever we know about the soul and its relationships is gathered from the **spring of Prophethood**. Some philosophers have written something about it but their knowledge is borrowed from **that spring**. The fact that **the souls do have a relationship with the graves** should be viewed through the eye of visions which indicates that the soul has a relationship with that heap of

clay and that the greeting:

السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكُمْ يَا أَهْلَ الْقُبُورِ¹⁷⁴

is responded to. He who uses the faculties through which the condition of the graves can be viewed, can obtain knowledge of such relationship....

The faculty of seeing visions is needed for appreciating the relationship of souls with the graves. He who denies this is in error. A large number of Prophets and millions of the righteous bear witness to this relationship which cannot be denied, though the nature of that relationship may not be determined through reason. In short, spiritual sight finally settles all these matters. If the ear cannot see, the ear is not at fault because seeing is not its function. I can affirm from personal experience that the soul has a relationship with the grave and it is possible to hold converse with the dead.

The soul also has a relationship with heaven where it is assigned a station. This is an established verity which is testified to by the Hindū scriptures also. This is a generally admitted verity except in the case of those who deny the survival of the soul. It is the faculty of seeing visions that indicates the nature of that relationship.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, pp. 287-290]

The soul is not something in space. The nature of its relationships cannot be determined. After death the soul has a relationship with the grave which is revealed to those who possess the faculty of seeing visions. They can see the dwellers of the graves sitting in their graves and can hold converse with them. This is established by true

¹⁷⁴ Peace be on you, O dwellers of the graves. [Publisher]

Aḥādīth. A well known *Ḥadīth* mentions *Ṣalāt* in a grave, it is also mentioned in the *Aḥādīth* that the dead can hear the sound of footsteps and respond to *Assalāmu ‘Alaikum*. They also have a relationship with heaven. There are different degrees of their heavenly exaltation. Some arrive at the first heaven, others reach the second or third heaven, but all righteous souls are exalted as is mentioned in true *Ḥadīth* and is also indicated by the verse:

لَا تُفْتَحُ لَهُمُ أَبْوَابُ السَّمَاءِ¹⁷⁵

but the nature of their relationship to heaven or to the graves cannot be determined.

[Al-Ḥaq, Mubāḥatha Delhī, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 4, p. 215]

¹⁷⁵ ‘(Those who reject Our Signs and turn away from them with disdain), the gates of the spiritual firmament will not be opened for them.’—Al-A‘rāf, 7:41 [Publisher]

16

RESURRECTION

Satan creates many doubts and the most dangerous doubt that arises in the mind of man and makes him a loser in this world and in the hereafter is with regard to the life after death. A great source of virtue and righteousness, in addition to other means and sources, is belief in the hereafter.

When a person regards the hereafter and all that concerns it as a mere tale or story, then it may be taken that he has been rejected and has lost both worlds. The fear of the hereafter makes a person anxious and afraid and drives him to the true fountain of understanding. True understanding cannot be achieved without the fear of God. Remember, therefore, that the arising of doubt concerning the hereafter puts faith in danger and makes a person's end uncertain.

[Malfūzāt, vol. I, pp. 53-54]

Three States of Existence

According to the Holy Qur'ān, there are three states of existence.

The first is the **world**, the name of which is the first creation and the house of earning. In this world a person earns good or ill. There is progress in good in the hereafter, but that is through the pure grace of God. It has nothing to do with a person's effort.

The second state of existence is called *Barzakh* (Purga-

tory). In Arabic idiom ***Barzakh*** is that which is situated between two things. As this state of existence lies between the first creation and the resurrection, it is called ***Barzakh***. This expression has always been used for the intervening state. It thus is a great testimony in support of the existence of the intervening state....

Barzakh is the state when the temporary human formation is dissolved and the soul and the body are separated from each other....

Though this mortal body is separated from the soul after death, yet in the intervening state every soul is temporarily invested with a body so that it might experience the result of its actions. That body is not like the earthly body, but is prepared from light or darkness according to the actions of each person. It might be said that in that state a person's actions serve as his body. In the Word of God, this is mentioned several times and some bodies are described as bright and some as dark, which are prepared from the light or from the darkness of actions. This is a mystery but is not beyond reason. A perfect person can acquire a bright body in this very life, apart from his earthly body, and there are many illustrations of it in the state of visions. It is difficult to explain this to a person whose mind is not keen, but those who have some experience of the state of visions would not look upon a body which is prepared from actions with wonder or incredulity, but would appreciate this explanation.

This body which is created from actions becomes a source of the recompense of good and evil in the state of *Barzakh*. I have experience of this matter. I have often, in a state of complete wakefulness, met some dead persons in a vision and I have observed the bodies of some

wicked and misguided persons which were so dark as if they had been compounded of smoke. I am personally acquainted with this condition and I affirm emphatically that as God Almighty has said, everyone is bestowed a body after death, which is either bright or dark. It would be a mistake to seek to prove these fine truths through the agency of reason alone. It should be realized that as the eye cannot demonstrate the taste of something sweet and the tongue cannot see anything, in the same way, the **knowledge of the hereafter** which is gained through visions cannot be tested by reason. God Almighty has appointed separate means for the perception of that which is hidden. Then seek everything through its proper means and you will find it.

It should be remembered that in His Word God has described as dead those who are involved in vice and misguidance and has described the virtuous as alive. The means of life of those who are heedless of God, for instance, eating and drinking and following their passions, are cut off and they do not partake of spiritual sustenance. Thus they are truly dead and will be alive only to suffer punishment. Allāh the Glorious has pointed towards this mystery as He says:

مَنْ يَأْتِ رَبَّهُ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ¹⁷⁶

The portion of him who comes to his Lord a sinner is hell; he shall neither die therein nor live. But those who love God Almighty do not die on death as they carry their sustenance with them.

Barzakh is followed by a state of existence which is called **resurrection**. At that stage every soul, good or bad,

¹⁷⁶ Tā Hā, 20:75 [Publisher]

righteous or disobedient, will be granted a definite bodily form of its own. That day has been appointed for the perfect manifestation of God when every person shall become acquainted fully with the existence of his Lord and shall arrive at the extreme point of his recompense. No one need wonder how God will accomplish this for He has power and does whatever He wills, as He has said Himself:

أَوَلَمْ يَرَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنَّا خَلَقْنَاهُ مِنْ نُطْفَةٍ فَإِذَا هُوَ خَصِيمٌ مُبِينٌ
وَضَرَبَ لَنَا مَثَلًا وَنَسِيَ خَلْقَهُ قَالَ مَنْ يُحْيِي الْعِظَامَ وَهِيَ رُومٌ
قُلْ يُحْيِيهَا الَّذِي أَنشَأَهَا أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ¹⁷⁷
أَوَلَيْسَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ بِقَدِيرٍ عَلَى أَن يَخْلُقَ مِثْلَهُمْ
بَلْ هُوَ الْخَلْقُ الْعَلِيمُ¹⁷⁸ إِنَّمَا أَمْرُهُ إِذَا أَرَادَ شَيْئًا أَن يَقُولَ لَهُ كُنْ
فَيَكُونُ فَسُبْحَانَ الَّذِي بِيَدِهِ مَلَكُوتُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ وَرَأْسُ تَرْجُمُونُ¹⁷⁸

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 402-407]

A New Body is Bestowed in the Grave

Islām sets forth the high philosophy that everyone is bestowed a kind of body in the grave which is necessary for experiencing delight and torment. We cannot say for creation of what material that new body is made, for this mortal body becomes dead and no one has observed it

¹⁷⁷ Does not man see that We have created him from a mere sperm-drop? Yet lo! He is an open quarreller! And he coins similitudes for Us and forgets his own creation. He says, 'Who can quicken the bones when they are decayed?' Say, 'He, Who created them the first time, will quicken them; and He knows every kind of creation full well.'—Yā Sīn, 36:78-80 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁸ Has not He Who created the heavens and the earth the power to create the like of them? Yea, and He is indeed the Supreme Creator, the All-Knowing. Verily His command, when He intends a thing, is only that He says to it, 'Be!', and it begins to be. So Holy is He, in Whose hand is the kingdom of all things. And to Him will you all be brought back.—Yā Sīn, 36:82-84 [Publisher]

coming alive in the grave. The earthly body is often cremated or is preserved in museums and is kept outside a grave for long periods. If this body were to come alive, people would observe it and yet the Holy Qur'ān affirms that a dead person comes alive. One has, therefore, to accept that a dead person is revived with a body which we cannot see. May be that that body is created from the imperceptible qualities of this body. After that body is bestowed, human faculties are revived as this second body is much finer than the first body. It experiences visions very widely and all the realities of the hereafter become visible to it as they are. Wrongdoers then suffer not only a physical torment, but also a torment of despair. Thus it is an agreed principle of Islām that the torment or comfort of the grave is also experienced through a body, and this is the demand of reason also inasmuch as experience has affirmed that the spiritual faculties of man do not manifest themselves without a body.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 70-71]

Nature of the Hereafter

The hereafter is a reflection of this world, and the consequences of faith and disbelief that appear spiritually in this world would be demonstrated physically in the hereafter. God, the Glorious, has said:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَلَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ¹⁷⁹

He who is blind in this world shall be blind in the hereafter.

We should not be surprised at this and should reflect how

¹⁷⁹ Bani Isrā'il 17:73 [Publisher]

spiritual matters are personified in a dream and the matter is even more surprising in a vision when spiritual matters take on physical shape before our eyes. Very often in complete wakefulness one meets those souls who have passed away from this world, and they appear in their original bodies wearing the clothes of this world and they talk and the holy ones out of them convey news about the future, by God's command, and those news are fulfilled in fact. Often in complete wakefulness a sweet drink or some fruit which is very delicious comes to hand in a vision. This humble one has experience of all this. I have personal experience that some delicious food or fruit or sweet drink comes into view and is put into one's mouth by a hidden hand and one enjoys its delicious taste while one continues to talk to other people and one's senses continue to work. Not that it is an illusion or baseless fantasy. Instead Allāh, Whose station is:

بِكُلِّ خَلْقٍ عَلِيمٌ¹⁸⁰

He demonstrates by way of example a kind of creation and birth in this very world.

This is testified to in every age by those who possess insight. Why should one wonder at the personified creation which will be seen in the hereafter when the scales of deeds would be beheld and the narrow bridge will be seen and many spiritual matters will take on physical forms? Is it beyond the power of Him Who has shown this system of personified creation in this world to those who possess insight to exhibit it in the hereafter also? These personifications have a relationship with the

¹⁸⁰ 'He knows every kind of creation full well.'—Yā Sīn, 36:80
[Publisher]

hereafter. When this personified creation is demonstrated to the purified people in this world, which is not a place of manifestation of complete cutting asunder, why should it not become visible in the hereafter which is a state of complete and perfect cutting asunder from the world.

It should be remembered that all those wonders of which a veiled one reads in the verses of the Holy Qur'ān, which relate to the hereafter, are disclosed in visions to a person possessing insight, in this very world. Those whose insight does not penetrate to the reality wonder at these statements and often objections arise in their minds with regard to them that all these matters appear to them opposed to truth and reason, such as the sitting of God Almighty on His Throne on the Day of Judgement, the standing of angels in rows, the weighing of deeds in scales, the crossing of the narrow bridge by people, the slaughtering of death like a sheep after the Judgement, the appearance of deeds like handsome or ugly people and the flowing of streams of milk and honey in paradise, etc.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 61-62]

The condition of a person after death is nothing new. It is a clear representation of his life in this world. The condition of a person's beliefs and actions, righteous or unrighteous, is hidden inside him in this world and its poison or antidote influences him in a secret way. In the life after death all these will become manifest. One experiences a sample of it in dreams. In a dream, one observes the conditions which prevail at the time in one's body. When one is heading towards high fever, one beholds fire and flames of fire in one's dream and when one is about to suffer from influenza, one finds oneself in water in a dream. Whatever disorder one's body is ready

for is personified in one's dreams. The same is the case in the life after death. As a dream produces a change inside us and demonstrates our spiritual condition in a physical form, the same will happen in the life after death and our deeds and their consequences will be physically demonstrated and whatever we carry with us from this world in a hidden manner will all appear openly on our countenances on that day. As a person views diverse forms of images in a dream and never considers that they are images, but believes them to be real, the same will happen in the life after death. Through these images, God Almighty will demonstrate a new power. As His power is absolute, then, even if we do not talk of images, it will be true and absolutely correct to say that, by the grace of God, it is a new creation. God Almighty says:

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ¹⁸¹

No one, who performs good deeds, knows what a variety of favours lie in store for him.

Thus God describes those bounties as hidden, no specimen of which is to be found in the world. It is obvious that the bounties of the world are not hidden from us and that we are well acquainted with milk and pomegranates and grapes and we always eat them. This shows that those bounties will be of a different type and will have nothing in common with these except the name. He who considers paradise as a collection of worldly bodies wholly misunderstands the Holy Qur'ān.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 396-398]

¹⁸¹ Al-Sajdah, 32:18 [Publisher]

Three Qur'ānic Insights about the Hereafter

The Holy Qur'ān divides into three the conditions that one encounters after death and there are three Qur'ānic insights about the hereafter....

The first is that the Holy Qur'ān repeatedly states that the hereafter is nothing new but that all its spectacles are the reflections of this worldly life, as it is said:

وَكُلُّ إِنْسَانٍ أَلَمْنَهُ لَغْوَهُ فِي عَقِبِهِ ۖ وَأُخْرِجُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ كِتَابًا يَتْلُقُهُ مَشْهُورًا¹⁸²

In this very world, the effect of every person's doings have We firmly fastened to his neck; and We shall display their hidden effects on the Day of Judgement and show them to him in the shape of an open book.

The word bird has been here used metaphorically for deeds. For every deed, good or bad, flies away like a bird; its labour or its delight disappears and only its foulness or fineness remains in the hearts.

It is a Qur'ānic principle that every action has its hidden impress. Every action of a person attracts Divine action corresponding to it which preserves the quality of that action and does not let it disappear. Its impress is inscribed upon the heart and the countenance and the eyes and the hands and feet. This is the hidden record of actions which will be made manifest in the life to come.

At another place it is said with regard to those who are admitted to paradise:

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ¹⁸³

That is to say: The light of faith which is bestowed in a

¹⁸² Banī Isrā'īl, 17:14 [Publisher]

¹⁸³ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:13 [Publisher]

hidden manner upon the believers will on that day be seen openly running before them and on their right hands.

At another place the wicked have been addressed:

أَلْهَكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ ۚ حَتَّىٰ دُرُّكُمْ إِلَىٰ الْمَقَابِرِ ۚ كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ ثُمَّ
 كَلَّا سَوْفَ تَعْلَمُونَ ۚ كَلَّا لَوْ تَعْلَمُونَ عِلْمَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ لَتَرَوُنَّ الْجَحِيمَ ۚ
 ثُمَّ لَتَرَوُنَّهَا عَيْنَ الْيَقِينِ ۚ ثُمَّ لَتُسْأَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيمِ ۚ¹⁸⁴

The excessive desire of worldly possessions prevented you from seeking the hereafter till you reached the graves. Do not be enamoured of this world. You will soon come to know that it is wrong to fall in love with this world. I remind you that you will soon come to know that it is no use loving this world. If only you knew with certainty, you would surely see hell in this very life. Then in the world of *Barzakh* you will see it with the eyes of certainty. Then, at the time of resurrection, you will have to face full accountability, and that Divine chastisement will overtake you and you will come to know of the hell, not theoretically but practically.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 400-402]

The second insight which the Holy Qur'ān has set forth with regard to the life after death is that in the hereafter all those matters that were spiritual in this world will be physically personified whether in the state of *Barzakh* or in the state of resurrection. One of the relevant verses is:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا¹⁸⁵

He who is blind in this life shall be blind in the hereafter.

¹⁸⁴ Al-Takāthur, 102:2-9 [Publisher]

¹⁸⁵ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

This means that the spiritual blindness of this world will be felt physically in the other world.

At another place it is said:

خُذْهُ فَعَلُّوهُ ۝ ثُمَّ الْجَحِيمَ صَلُّوهُ ۝ ثُمَّ
 فِي سِلْسِلَةٍ ذَرْعُهَا سَبْعُونَ ذِرَاعًا فَاسْلُكُوهُ ۝¹⁸⁶

Seize this denizen of hell and fetter him and burn him in hell-fire and bind him with a chain the length of which is seventy yards.

These verses show that the spiritual torment of this world will appear in physical form in the hereafter. The collar of worldly desires which had bent a person's head towards the earth will appear manifestly in the second life. In the same way the chain of worldly desires will be seen around the feet. The burning sensation of worldly desires will be seen as a fiercely flaming fire.

A disobedient person has inside of him a hell of worldly desires and feels the burning of that hell in his failures. When he is cast away from his mortal desires and is confronted with eternal despair, God Almighty will cause this despair to appear to him as physical fire. As He has said:

وَحِجَابَ بَيْنَهُمْ وَبَيْنَ مَا يَشْتَهُونَ¹⁸⁷

A curtain will be drawn between them and that which they desire.

This will be the root of the torment. The direction to bind him with a chain the length of which is seventy yards is an indication that a disobedient one often attains the age

¹⁸⁶ Al-Hāqqah, 69:31-33 [Publisher]

¹⁸⁷ Al-Saba', 34:55 [Publisher]

of seventy years. Very often he is granted seventy years of active life leaving out of account his childhood and his extreme old age. The miserable one passes these seventy years caught in the desires of this world and does not wish to be free of this chain. Thus God Almighty says that the seventy years that he passed in his devotion to the world will be personified in the hereafter as a chain, the length of which will be seventy yards, each yard corresponding to a year. It should be remembered that God Almighty imposes no distress from Himself upon a person, but confronts him with his evil deeds. Referring to His eternal law, God Almighty says at another place:

إِنظِرْهُنَّ إِلَى ظِلٍّ ذِي ثَلَاثِ شُعَبٍ لَا ظَلِيلٍ وَلَا يُغْنِي مِنَ النَّارِ¹⁸⁸

Proceed, O evil doers and misguided ones, towards a shelter which has three sections, neither affording shade nor protecting from the blaze.

In this verse by the three sections are meant the wild and the animal and the speculative faculties. These three faculties, of those who do not cast them into the moral mould and do not co-ordinate them, will be manifested on the Judgement Day as if they are three branches without leaves which can afford no protection from the blaze in which they will burn.

Again, referring to the same eternal way of His, Allāh the Exalted, says in favour of the inmates of Paradise:

يَوْمَ تَرَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ يَسْعَى نُورُهُمْ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ¹⁸⁹

On that day, you will see that the light of the believing men and believing women that is hidden in this world,

¹⁸⁸ Al-Mursalāt, 77:31-32 [Publisher]

¹⁸⁹ Al-Ḥadīd, 57:13 [Publisher]

will be manifested running ahead of them and on their right hands.

In the Hereafter Spiritual Conditions will become Visible

He says in another verse:

يَوْمَ تَبْيَضُّ وُجُوهٌ وَتَسْوَدُّ وُجُوهٌ¹⁹⁰

On that day some faces will be darkened and some will be bright full of light.

At another place it is said:

مَثَلُ الْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي وُعدَ الْمُتَّقُونَ، فِيهَا أَنْهَارٌ مِنْ مَّاءٍ غَيْرِ آسِنٍ وَأَنْهَارٌ
مِنْ لَبَنٍ لَمْ يَتَغَيَّرْ طَعْمُهُ وَأَنْهَارٌ مِنْ خَمْرٍ لَذَّةٍ لِلشَّارِبِينَ وَأَنْهَارٌ
مِنْ عَسَلٍ مُصَفًّى¹⁹¹

The paradise promised to the righteous is like a garden in which flow rivers of water that never stagnate; and rivers of milk of which the taste changes not; and rivers of wine full of delight without any intoxication for those who drink; and rivers of honey which is so pure and unadulterated.

At this place it is clearly stated that paradise may be understood as having endless streams flowing with these things. The water of life which a person possessing insight drinks spiritually in this life will be present overtly in the life to come. The spiritual milk of which he drinks spiritually like a suckling babe in this world, will be seen openly in paradise. The wine of the love of God with which he was spiritually inebriated in the world will

¹⁹⁰ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:107 [Publisher]

¹⁹¹ Muḥammad, 47:16 [Publisher]

be made manifest in paradise in streams. The honey of the sweetness of faith which one possessed of insight swallowed spiritually in the world will be felt and observed in the shape of streams in paradise. Every dweller of paradise shall display a spiritual condition openly in his rivers and his gardens and on that day God Himself will emerge from behind the veils for the dwellers of paradise. In short, spiritual conditions will be no longer hidden but will become physically visible.

There will be Continuous Progress in Heaven

The third insight is that in the hereafter there will be unending progress. God Almighty has said:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مَعَهُ نُورُهُمْ يَسْعَىٰ بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ يَقُولُونَ
رَبَّنَا آتِنَا لَنَا نُورَكَ وَاعْفِرْ لَنَا إِنَّكَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ¹⁹²

On the Day of Judgement, the light of those who are blessed with the light of faith in this world will run ahead of them and on their right. They will pray: Lord, perfect our light for us and forgive us, surely Thou hast power over all things.

Their supplication for the perfection of their light indicates that their progress will be unlimited. They will attain one perfection of light and will then behold another, and will consider their previous perfection as deficient and will supplicate for a second perfection, and when they attain that they will behold a third stage of perfection and seeing that they will belittle their previous excellence and will desire that stage of perfection. This desire for progress is indicated by the expression: Perfect our light for us.

¹⁹² Al-Taḥrīm, 66:9 [Publisher]

In this way, an endless system of progress will continue which will never suffer decline. They will not be expelled from paradise but will advance forward every day and will not move back. A question arises that having entered paradise, why should they seek forgiveness as their sins will have been forgiven? The answer is that the primary meaning of *maghfirat* is the suppression and covering up of an imperfect condition. Dwellers of paradise will desire to obtain perfection and to be sunk altogether in light. On beholding the second condition they will find their first condition defective and they will seek to have it suppressed. Then beholding a third perfection, they will desire with regard to their second condition that it should be suppressed and hidden. Thus they will desire unending *maghfirat*.

This is the same *Istighfār* which some ignorant ones make the basis of criticism of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) but it will now be clear that this desire for *Istighfār* is the pride of man. A person who is born of woman and does not make *Istighfār* his habit is an insect and not a man, is blind and not seeing and is foul and not pure.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 408-413]

17

HEAVEN AND HELL

What is the object of religion? It is that having the certainty of faith in the existence and perfect attributes of God Almighty, man should attain release from the passions of self and should develop personal love for God. That is the paradise which will be manifested in diverse ways in the hereafter. To remain unaware of the True God and to keep away from Him and not to have true love for Him is the hell which will be manifested in diverse ways in the hereafter.

[Chashma Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 352]

The reality of heaven and hell that has been set forth by the Holy Qur'ān has not been set forth by any other book. It has indicated plainly that this system starts in this very life. It is said:

وَلِمَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّاتٌ¹⁹³

For him who fears to stand before his Lord, there are two Gardens.

One Garden is obtained in this very world. The fear of God restrains a person from vice. To run after vice generates a restlessness and distress in the heart which itself is a fearful hell. He who fears God avoids vice and escapes the torment which is generated by the slavery of passion and he makes progress towards faithfulness and

¹⁹³ Al-Raḥmān, 55:47 [Publisher]

leaning towards God whereby he is bestowed a delight and joy and thus his heavenly life begins in this very world.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 155-156]:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ رَؤُوفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ¹⁹⁴

That is, of the people there are those of such exalted spiritual station who surrender themselves to the pleasure of Allāh. They sell their lives and buy the pleasure of Allāh. These are the people who are the recipients of Divine mercy. Similarly, one who has attained the exalted spiritual station sacrifices himself in the path of God.

In this verse God Almighty says that it is the one who sells his soul in order to win the pleasure of God who finds deliverance from all suffering. Such a one gives proof by his devotion that he belongs to God and conceives himself to have been created for the obedience of the Creator and the service of His creatures. He performs all good actions that are related to every faculty with such eagerness and sincerity of heart as if he beholds the True Beloved in the mirror of his obedience, his will conforms to the will of God Almighty and all his delight is in obedience to Him and righteous action proceeds from him not by way of labour, but on account of its delight and attraction. The paradise that a spiritual person finds immediately and that which will be bestowed upon him in future are a reflection of this life which will be personified physically in the other world by the power of God.

¹⁹⁴ Al-Baqarah, 2:208 [Publisher]

Two Gardens for the Righteous

This is indicated in the following verses in which Allāh the Glorious says:

وَلِمَن خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ جَنَّتٌ¹⁹⁵

وَسَفْهُمُ رَبُّهُمْ سُورًا طَهُورًا¹⁹⁶

إِنَّ الْكَافِرَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ۝ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا

عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا¹⁹⁷

يُسْقَوْنَ فِيهَا كَأْسًا كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا زَنْجَبِيلًا ۝ عَيْنًا فِيهَا تُسَمَّى سَلْسَبِيلًا¹⁹⁸

إِنَّا آَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ سَلَاسِلًا ۝ وَآَغْلَلْنَا سَحَائِرًا¹⁹⁹

وَمَن كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآٰخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا²⁰⁰

He who fears God Almighty and stands in awe of His Greatness and Glory will have two Gardens, one in this world and the other in the hereafter.

Those who are devoted to God are given to drink of a beverage which purifies their hearts and thoughts and designs.

The virtuous shall drink of a beverage which is tempered with camphor out of a spring which they dig out themselves. The root of the word camphor that has been used in this context means suppressing and covering up. This is an indication that they have drunk of the cup of cutting asunder from the world and turning to God with such

¹⁹⁵ Al-Raḥmān, 55:47 [Publisher]

¹⁹⁶ Al-Dahr, 76:22 [Publisher]

¹⁹⁷ Al-Dahr, 76:6-7 [Publisher]

¹⁹⁸ Al-Dahr, 76:18-19 [Publisher]

¹⁹⁹ Al-Dahr, 76:5 [Publisher]

²⁰⁰ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

sincerity that their love of the world has been cooled down. All emotions are generated by the ideas of the heart and when the heart withdraws far away from improper thoughts and has no concern with them, the emotions are subdued till they disappear altogether. In this verse God Almighty desires to convey that those who turn wholly to Him cast aside their passions and their hearts become cool to worldly activities and their emotions are covered up and suppressed as poisonous matter is suppressed by camphor.

Then Almighty Allāh says: After partaking of the camphor, they drink of a cup flavoured with ginger. The word for ginger in Arabic is composed of two roots which mean ascending a mountain. It should be known that after a person recovers from a poisonous disease, his health passes through two stages. The first is a condition when the poisonous matter is subdued and dangerous tendencies are corrected and poisonous conditions are left behind and the fatal storm that had arisen is banked down. But the limbs are still weak and the patient cannot carry out anything that requires strength and moves about like a person who is half dead. The second stage is when health returns and the body gains strength and by the restoration of strength the patient is encouraged to think that he can ascend a mountain and can run about with delight on the heights. With reference to this condition, God Almighty indicates that virtuous people drink of a cup which is tempered with ginger, that is to say, their spiritual condition arrives at full strength so that they can scale the heights and carry out difficult tasks and exhibit wonderful devotion in the cause of God Almighty.

This property of ginger, that it strengthens bodily heat and improves the digestion, and its Arabic name that has been used in the verse is adopted as an indication that it so strengthens a weak person and generates such heat in him as enables him to scale the heights. The purpose of these two verses which refer to camphor and ginger is to indicate that when a person moves away from passion towards virtue, his poisonous tendencies are suppressed and begin to decline as camphor suppresses poisonous matters. That is why it is found useful in cases of cholera and typhoid fever. When poisonous matters are suppressed and a weak health is gained, the next stage is that the patient is strengthened with a drink tempered with ginger. This drink is a manifestation of the beauty of God Almighty which constitutes a nourishment for the soul. When a person is strengthened by this manifestation he is able to ascend great heights and to perform such surprisingly hard tasks in the cause of God Almighty as cannot be performed unless the heart is inspired by the heat of love. To illustrate these two conditions God Almighty has here employed two Arabic words, one camphor which connotes suppression and the other ginger which connotes ascending the heights. These are two conditions that are encountered by the seekers in their progress.

Then the verses proceed that:

إِنَّمَا آغَشَيْنَا الْإِخْفَرِينَ سَلْسِلًا وَأَغْلَلَّا وَ سَجِيرًا²⁰¹

For those who are disinclined to accept the truth God has prepared chains and collars and a blazing fire.

The meaning of the verse is that those who do not seek God Almighty with a true heart suffer a reaction. They

²⁰¹ Al-Dahr, 76:5 [Publisher]

are so occupied with the world as if their feet are chained, and they are so much bent down in secular pursuits as if there are collars around their necks which do not permit them to raise their heads, and their hearts burn with worldly desires that they might acquire so much wealth or property or dominion over a region or victory over an enemy. Finding them unworthy and occupied with evil deeds God Almighty subjects them to these three handicaps. There is an indication here that when a person acts there is a corresponding action by God Almighty. For instance, when a person shuts all the windows of his room the corresponding action of God Almighty is that He makes the room dark. That which has been appointed as a necessary consequence under the Divine law of nature is the action of God Almighty, inasmuch as He is the Cause of causes. In the same way, when a person swallows a fatal dose of poison the reaction of God Almighty would be that he would die. In the same way, if a person acts carelessly so as to attract an infectious disease, the reaction of God Almighty would be that he would suffer from that disease. Thus, as in our physical life there is a necessary consequence of every action and that consequence is an action of God Almighty, the same is the case in spiritual matters. God Almighty makes these points very clear in the following two verses:

الَّذِينَ جَاءُوا مِنَّا كَقُلُوبِهِمْ سُبُلَنَا ²⁰²

فَلَمَّا رَاغَوْا آثَارًا لَّعَنَ اللَّهُ قُلُوبَهُمْ ²⁰³

This means that those who seek God with full effort,

²⁰² Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:70, [Publisher]

²⁰³ Al-Şaff, 61:6, Publisher.)

their action is followed by Divine action that they are shown the path of God; those who deviate from the right course, their action is followed by Divine action that their hearts are perverted.

This is further illustrated in the verse:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا²⁰⁴

He who is blind in this world shall be blind in the hereafter and even more astray.

This is an indication that the righteous behold God in this very world and thus the foundation of heavenly life is laid in this world and the blindness of the hereafter is generated by the foul and blind life of this world. Again it is said:

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ²⁰⁵

Those who believe and act righteously shall inherit the gardens beneath which rivers flow. In this verse God Almighty has described faith as a garden beneath which rivers flow.

It is here pointed out that the relationship which streams of water have with gardens is the relationship which subsists between faith and actions. As no garden can flourish without water, no faith can be a living faith without righteous action. If there is faith and there are no actions, that faith is vain, and if there are actions but there is no faith, those actions are mere show. The reality of the Islāmic paradise is that it is a reflection of the faith and actions in this life. It is not a new thing which will

²⁰⁴ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

²⁰⁵ Al-Baqarah, 2:26 [Publisher]

be bestowed upon a person from outside. A person's paradise is generated from within himself and everyone's paradise are his faith and his righteous action, the delight of which begins in this life. The gardens of faith and actions and the streams that flow through them are seen in a hidden manner in this life, but in the hereafter they will be perceived overtly. The holy teaching of God Almighty tells us that the true and pure and firm and perfect faith in God and His attributes and His designs is a pleasant garden of fruit trees and righteous actions are the streams that irrigate that garden. This is indicated in the verse:

ضَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا كَلِمَةً طَيِّبَةً كَشَجَرَةٍ طَيِّبَةٍ أَضَلُّهَا ثَابِتٌ
 ٢٠٦ تَقْرَعُهَا فِي السَّمَاءِ ۖ تُؤْتِيهِ أَكْثَرُ الْحُلِيِّ حِينٍ

That is, the word of faith which is free from all excess and defect and falsehood and vanity, and is perfect in every way, is like a tree that is free from every defect, its root is firm in the earth and its branches spread into heaven and it brings forth fruit at all times. At no time are its branches without fruit.

In this verse God Almighty has likened a word of faith to a tree that bears fruit at all times and has specified three signs of it.

The first is that its root, that is to say, its true meaning should be firm in the soil of man's heart. Nature and human conscience should have accepted its truth and reality.

The second sign is that its branches should spread into heaven, that is to say, it should be reasonable and should

²⁰⁶ Ibrāhīm, 14:25-26 [Publisher]

be in accord with the heavenly law of nature which is the action of God. The arguments in support of its correctness and truth should be deducible from the law of nature and should be so perfect as if they are in heaven and cannot be reached by any criticism.

The third sign is that its fruit should be eternal and unending. That is to say, its blessings and effects should be perceptible in every age and should not cease after any particular period.

It is then said:

مَثَلُ كَلِمَةٍ خَيِّثَةٍ كَشَجَرَةٍ خَبِيثَةٍ اجْتُثَّتْ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْأَرْضِ بِمَا كَانَتْ مِنْ قَرَارٍ²⁰⁷

The evil word resembles a tree which does not take root in the soil or, in other words, human nature does not accept it and in no way does it stabilize. It is not supported by reasonable arguments or by the law of nature or by human conscience and is like a mere tale or story.

As the Holy Qur'ān has referred to the good trees of faith as resembling grapes and pomegranates and other nice fruits, and has said that they will be personified like those fruits and resemble them, in the same way, it has called the evil tree of faithlessness in the hereafter by the name of *Zaqqūm*, as it is said:

أَذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ نُزُلًا أَمْ شَجَرَةُ الزَّقْقُومِ ۖ إِنَّا جَعَلْنَاهَا فِتْنَةً لِلظَّالِمِينَ ۖ
 إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ۖ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ ۖ²⁰⁸
 إِنَّ شَجَرَةَ الزَّقْقُومِ ۖ طَعَامٌ لِلْأَشْيِيمِ ۖ كَالْمُهْلِ يَغْلِي فِي الْبُطُونِ ۖ
 كَغَلْيِ الْحَمِيمِ ۖ ذُقْ ۖ إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ ۖ²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ Ibrāhīm, 14:27 [Publisher]

²⁰⁸ Al-Ṣāffāt, 37:63-66 [Publisher]

²⁰⁹ Al-Dukhān 44:44-47,50 [Publisher]

The wicked will be asked whether the gardens of paradise are better or the tree *Zaqqūm* which is a trial for wrong-doers. It is a tree that springs forth from the bottom of hell, that is to say, it is born of arrogance and self-esteem. Its fruit is like the heads of Satan which means that its eating would be fatal....

It is the food of those dwellers of hell who deliberately choose sin. Its eating is like swallowing molten copper which boils up in the belly like scalding water.

The one condemned to hell is asked to eat it and is reminded that if he had not been arrogant and had not turned away from the truth out of self-esteem, he would not have had to endure these torments:

إِنَّكَ أَنتَ الْعَزِيزُ الْكَرِيمُ²¹⁰

Thus as God Almighty has likened the words of faith of this world to the trees of paradise, He has likened the words of faithlessness of this world to the tree of hell and has indicated that the root of heaven or hell begins from this world. At another place hell is referred to as the:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَّةُ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْآفِئَةِ²¹¹

That is to say: Hell is a fire the source of which is the wrath of God. It blazes forth from sin and first overcomes the heart.

This is an indication that at the root of this fire are the sorrows and desires and torments that seize the heart, inasmuch as spiritual torment begins with the heart and

²¹⁰ 'Thou didst consider thyself the mighty, the honourable.'—Al-Dukhān, 44:50 [Publisher]

²¹¹ Al-Humazah, 104:7-8 [Publisher]

then comprises the whole body.

At another place it is said:

وَقُودُهَا النَّاسُ وَالْحِجَارَةُ²¹²

That is to say: The fuel of the fire of hell which keeps it blazing are first those men who turn aside from God and worship other things.

As it is said:

إِنَّكُمْ وَمَا تَعْبُدُونَ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ حَصَبُ جَهَنَّمَ²¹³

You and those whom you worshipped falsely, who were called gods despite being human, will be cast into hell.

Secondly, the fuel of hell are the idols. The meaning is that if these things had not existed there would have been no hell. Thus in the holy word of God, heaven and hell are not like this physical world. The source of both of them are spiritual matters. It is true that in the other world they will appear as physical, but they will not belong to this physical world.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 385-393]

The Torment and Comfort of the Grave is Perceived through the Body

To enter heaven it is necessary to have a body, but that body will not be compounded of physical elements inasmuch as the fruits of heaven will not be physical, but will be a new creation. Therefore, the body in heaven will also be a new creation which will be different from the original body. It is necessary that after death the believers should have a body. On the night of his ascen-

²¹² Al-Baqarah, 2:25 and Al-Taḥrīm, 66:7 [Publisher]

²¹³ Al-Anbiyā', 21:99 [Publisher]

sion, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) did not see only the souls of the other Prophets, but saw the bodies of all of them, and Jesus had not a body different from the others.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 387, footnote]

We have also exposed the error of the Christians in that they think that heaven will only be a spiritual experience. We have proved that the nature of man is such that his spiritual faculties **need a body** for their perfect and complete functioning. For instance, it is our observation that an injury inflicted upon a certain part of the brain destroys memory, and that an injury inflicted upon another part destroys the faculty of thinking, and that a disturbance occasioned to the nervous system affects several spiritual faculties. Such being the case that a minor disturbance of the body occasions a disturbance in the functioning of the soul, how can we expect that after a total separation from the body the soul would be able to maintain its integrity? Therefore, Islām teaches that everyone is bestowed a body in the grave which is needed for the perception of delight and torment. We cannot say from what material that body is prepared except that this mortal body becomes naught and no one observes that it is revived in the grave. Very often it is cremated or is preserved in a museum or is kept outside a grave for long periods. If it were a fact that it is revived, that would have been witnessed, yet it is proved from the Holy Qur'ān that a dead person is revived and we have, therefore, to accept that he is revived with another body which we are not able to see. Very probably that body is made out of the fine qualities of this body and along with it human faculties are revived. As that body is much finer than this body, the door of visions is opened widely to it

and the realities of the hereafter are seen as they are. The wrongdoers then suffer a torment of despair in addition to the physical torment. It is thus an agreed principle in Islām that the torment or comfort of the grave is perceived through a body. Reason also demands this as experience has established that the spiritual faculties of man do not manifest themselves without a body.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 70-71]

The Philosophy of Punishment in the Hereafter

There is a philosophy about punishment in the hereafter which is not set forth perfectly by any religion except Islām. God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَى فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَى وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا²¹⁴

He who is blind in this world shall be blind in the hereafter and even more astray.

This shows that a person takes with him from this world the eyes with which to behold God Almighty and the senses with which to perceive Him. He who does not acquire these senses in this life will not enjoy them in the hereafter. This is a mystery which is not understood by the common people. If its meaning is not that which we have set forth, then it is entirely wrong that those who are blind in this world shall be blind in the hereafter. The truth is that to recognize God Almighty without any error and to acquire a true understanding of His attributes in this world is the key to all comforts and delights of the future. This verse clearly indicates that we carry a torment with us from this world and that the blind existence and foul actions of this world will appear in the

²¹⁴ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

form of the torment of hell in the other world and they will not be anything new. As by shutting the doors of a room a person deprives himself of light and of fresh life-giving air, or by swallowing a poison he puts an end to his life, in the same way, when he moves away from God and commits sin, he falls into a darkness and is involved in torment.

The meaning of *Junāh*, the Arabic word for sin, is to incline and to move away from the true centre. When a person moves away from God and withdraws from the light which descends upon the hearts from God, he is involved in a darkness which becomes a source of torment for him. Then he suffers the same type of torment of which type is his turning away. If he wishes to revert to the centre and transports himself to the spot where that light falls, he regains the light. As we observe in the world that we enjoy light in a room when we open its windows, in the same way, in the spiritual system to return to the true centre becomes the source of comfort and rescues from the suffering which had resulted from departing from the centre. This is called repentance. The darkness that is produced in this manner is called the misguidance of hell and to revert to the true centre which bestows comfort is called heaven. To move away from sin and to revert to virtue that would please God Almighty, becomes the atonement of the sin and wipes out its consequences. That is why God Almighty has said:

إِنَّ الْحَسَنَاتِ يُذْهِبْنَ السَّيِّئَاتِ²¹⁵

Good deeds wipe out evil deeds.

As vice contains the poison of destruction and good

²¹⁵ Hūd, 11:115 [Publisher]

contains the antidote of life, good alone is the means of overcoming the poison of vice. In other words, torment means the absence of comfort and salvation means the achievement of comfort and joy.

Torment is the Result of Man's Actions

Illness means the condition when the body does not function normally and health is the condition when all natural matters function in the proper way. The moving away of a hand or foot or any other limb from its proper position causes pain and if this condition persists for a time not only the affected limb becomes useless, but it begins to affect other limbs also. The same is the case with the soul. When a person moves away from God, Who is the True Source of his life, and departs from the religion of nature, he is involved in suffering and if his heart is not dead and retains its feeling, he feels the torment keenly. If this condition is not reformed, there is an apprehension that all spiritual faculties might gradually become useless and a severe torment might ensue. Thus no suffering comes from outside; all suffering is generated within a person. We do not deny that torment is God's action, but it is the consequence of man's actions as when a person swallows poison, God kills him. This is indicated by God, the Glorious, in the verses:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَّةُ الَّتِي تَطْلَعُ عَلَى الْآفِئِدَةِ ۝²¹⁶

The torment of God is the fire that God kindles and its flame rises from the heart of man.

It is thus clear that the real seed of torment is the foulness of one's being which assumes the form of torment.

²¹⁶ Al-Humazah, 104:7-8 [Publisher]

Nature of the Blessings of Paradise

In the same way, the source of the comfort of heaven are a person's own actions. If he does not depart from the religion of nature and does not move away from the centre and, as a servant, he lies at the threshold of God and partakes of the lights of Godhead, then he is like the healthy limb which has not moved from its position and is performing the function for which God has created it and he suffers no pain and all is comfort.

A Person's Heaven is Generated within Him

In the Holy Qur'ān, He says:

وَبَشِّرِ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتٍ تَجْرِي مِنْ تَحْتِهَا الْأَنْهَارُ²¹⁷

Convey to those who believe and act righteously the good news that for them are gardens beneath which rivers flow.

In this verse God Almighty has called faith a garden and righteous actions streams of water. This is the relationship between righteous actions and faith. As no garden can flourish and bring forth fruit without water, in the same way, no faith is helpful which is not accompanied by righteous action. So what is heaven? It is the embodiment of faith and righteous action. Like hell paradise too is nothing external. Indeed, a person's heaven is born within him.

Remember! The blessings that are bestowed there are nothing but the pious which is shaped in the world. True faith resembles a plant and righteous actions are like streams which irrigate that plant and maintain its green-

²¹⁷ Al-Baqarah, 2:26 [Publisher]

ness and glory. In this world they are perceived as if in a dream, but in the other world they will be felt and observed as realities. That is why it is said that when the dwellers of heaven are bestowed these bounties, they will say:

هَذَا الَّذِي رُزِقْنَا مِنْ قَبْلُ وَأُتُوا بِهِ مُتَشَابِهًا²¹⁸

This does not mean that we will be bestowed in heaven the milk, or honey, or grapes, or pomegranates, etc., that we consume here. They will be entirely different except in name. They are described physically but we are informed that they illumine the soul and create understanding of God. Their source is the soul and righteousness. It does not mean that in this world what we partake of milk, honey, grapes, pomegranates, etc., will also be provided in the hereafter. Not at all. Those things in their kind and condition will be totally different except those that have common names. Although all these blessings are exemplified in concrete terms, it has been pointed out at the same time that all these blessings illumine the soul and lead to the knowledge of Divine. Their source is soul and truth. ‘*What was given to us before*’, does not mean that they are material bounties of this world. No, absolutely not. What God means to say in this verse is that the believers who act righteously make with their own hands a heaven the fruit of which they will enjoy in the other world also. As they will have tasted that fruit spiritually in this world, they will recognize it in the other world and will exclaim: ‘These appear to be the same fruits and spiritual exaltations that we had enjoyed in the world’. In

²¹⁸ ‘This is what was given us before, and gifts mutually resembling shall be brought to them.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:26 [Publisher]

this manner those who worship God and possess spiritual insight will recognize them.

... there is a philosophy about heaven and hell which is as I have just set out. It should, however, not be forgotten that the punishments of this world are meant as a warning and a lesson and are part of a system of discipline. There is a relationship between statesmanship and mercy and these punishments are the reflection of that relationship. Human actions are preserved and recorded as sound is recorded in a gramophone. It is only a person who possesses insight who can draw pleasure and benefit from the contemplation of this system.

[Malfūzāt, vol. III, pp. 25-30]

Torment is something negative in nature. Absence of comfort is torment. Salvation is something positive in nature; that is, the recovery of comfort and prosperity is salvation. As darkness means absence of light, suffering means absence of well-being. Illness is the name of the condition when the body does not function properly and health is the name of the condition when all natural functions revert to normal. When the spiritual condition of a person moves away from the normal, this disturbance is called torment. When a limb like a hand or foot moves away from its proper position a pain is felt and the limb becomes unable to perform its allotted function and if it is neglected it gradually becomes useless or becomes infected and falls away. Very often there is apprehension of its neighbouring limbs being affected also. The pain that this limb generates does not come from outside but results naturally from its diseased condition. The same is the case with spiritual torment. When a person departs from the religion of nature and loses steadfastness, spiritual torment begins, though an ignorant, who is

steeped in heedlessness, may not feel it. In that condition the affected soul is disabled from performing spiritual service. If this condition lasts for a time the soul becomes useless and becomes dangerous for its neighbours. The torment with which it is afflicted does not come from outside, but is generated by its diseased condition. No doubt it is the act of God, but it is like the case when a person takes a fatal dose of arsenic, God Almighty kills him. Or when a person shuts all the windows of his room, God Almighty makes the room dark, or if a person were to cut off his tongue, God Almighty would deprive him of the power of speech. These are all the acts of God which follow upon the acts of man. In the same way, spiritual torment is the act of God Almighty which follows upon a person's own action. This is indicated in the verse:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَّةُ الَّتِي تَطَّلِمُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ²¹⁹

Chastisement of God is a torment inflicted by God. Its first flame rises from the heart of man himself.

This means that the root of the torment is in the heart of man and that the impure thoughts of the heart are the fuel of this hell. As the seed of the torment is the foulness of one's being which becomes personified as torment, it follows that that which removes this torment is righteousness and purity.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 81-82]

The roots of torment are the mistaken beliefs and wrong actions of a person. They will be personified by the wrath of God in the form of fire. As striking a stone hard

²¹⁹ Al-Humazah, I04:7-8 [Publisher]

produces fire, in the same way, Divine wrath striking these false beliefs and wrong actions will produce flames of fire and that fire will consume the disbelievers and the wrong-doers. As you observe that the fire of lightning meets the inner fire of a person and the two consume him, in the same way, the fire of Divine wrath meeting the fire of false beliefs and wrong actions consumes a person. This is indicated by Allāh the Exalted in the Holy Qur'ān:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَةُ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْفُجُورَةِ²²⁰

What is hell? It is the fire of Allāh's wrath, which sets the hearts ablaze. That is, the hearts in which the embers of misconduct and false beliefs are still smouldering will feed the flames of their own fire with the fire of the Divine wrath and the two fires jointly reduce them to ashes just as lightening reduces a person to ashes.

[Majmū'a Ishtihārāt, vol. II, pp. 189-190]

QUESTION:²²¹ Let Mirzā Ṣāhib recall his own belief, according to which after death a person who attains salvation will dwell in a heavenly mansion where God has planted a garden and where handsome women are provided and streams of wine, etc., are running. In short, even after salvation, all worldly provisions will be present and nothing more. Even that which is prohibited here, like wine and multiplicity of women, will be provided there. This is not true. Those who attain salvation shall pass their time happily and independently.

²²⁰ Al-Humazah, 104:7-8 [Publisher]

²²¹ This extract is from the debate held in 1886 between the Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (the Promised Messiah), and Lāla Murlīdhar, an Āryā Samājist. [Publisher]

ANSWER: According to your principle those who attain salvation will be expelled from the house of salvation after a fixed period and their weeping and crying will attract no mercy and the order of their expulsion will be carried out with great harshness against their will and they will be thrown out of the house of salvation in great disgrace and humiliation. At that time will not that paradise become a hell or even worse for them? In this condition of compulsive misery where will be their independence and what happiness will they feel? You say that those who attain salvation will dwell in great joy and happiness. Can any perfect happiness be enjoyed in a place where one is faced with the prospect of expulsion and enduring misery for millions of years once more, and all the time one is eaten up with the anxiety that after a short while one would have to encounter countless humiliations and would have to pass through incarnations of insects and dogs and cats?

May God save us from your house of salvation. If such is *Permeshwar* and his house of salvation, then the unfortunate pious people will have only weeping here and weeping there.

Your objection that in the paradise of the Muslims worldly bounties will also be provided has no substance. On the contrary it should put you and your *Permeshwar* to great shame, inasmuch as the All-Powerful and Self-Sufficient God of the Muslims has out of His limitless treasures permanently and eternally bestowed everything in the hereafter on those who believe in the Holy Qur'ān and has bestowed upon them spiritual as well as physical bounties, inasmuch as He knew that His true worshippers do not obey Him and worship Him in this world only through their souls, but through their souls and their

bodies together.

Human perfection is not achieved through the soul alone but through a combination of the soul and the body. In order to provide perfect good fortune for those obedient to Him and to recompense them fully, He divided the delight of eternal salvation into two kinds. He bestowed upon them the delights of His Beloved vision and sent down upon them His other bounties like rain. In short, He did that which was worthy of the powers and greatness and limitless mercy of that All-Powerful One. As a contrast, your *Permeshwar* proved to be poor and bankrupt and could not lead you to any goal nor provide you with any permanent joy on account of his helplessness and indigence and powerlessness. Indeed he could do nothing for you. He could not bestow either spiritual or physical bounties upon you forever and left you frustrated and unsuccessful and deprived on both sides. He, for whom you were ready to die and to whom you were devoted, proved so unjust and uncomprehending and unaware that he attached no value to your spiritual and physical labours and esteemed your loving fidelity and devotion as paid labour, extending over a few days. Can one entertain increasing love for such a miserly, powerless and ignorant *Permeshwar* and can any heart turn to him with perfect sincerity? Certainly not. On the other hand, on realizing his lack of power and generosity and appreciation, the souls of his worshippers would be grieved and remorseful that they had laboured uselessly for the sake of such a *Permeshwar* and for the limited salvation that he promised....

The Nature of the Bounties of Heaven

As regards the objection how would wine become lawful

in heaven when it is unlawful in this life, the answer is the same that God Almighty has Himself given that the wine of heaven has no relationship with the evil-inciting wines of the world. God Almighty has said:

وَسَقْفُهُمْ رُبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُورًا ۝²²²
 إِنَّ الْآبِرَارَ يَشْرَبُونَ مِنْ كَأْسٍ كَانَ مِزَاجُهَا كَافُورًا ۝ عَيْنًا يَشْرَبُ بِهَا
 عِبَادُ اللَّهِ يُفَجِّرُونَهَا تَفْجِيرًا ۝²²³

This means that: God will give the dwellers of paradise to drink a wine that will purify them altogether.

The virtuous shall drink of a cup which will be tempered with camphor, that is to say, by drinking that wine their hearts will grow cold altogether to the love of that which is beside God. That wine is a spring from which the men of God start drinking in this very world. They cause it to flow easily in wide and broad streams.

In other words, through their loving labour all their hindrances are removed and the ups and downs of their humanness are levelled. They cut asunder wholly from the world and turn to God, and their understanding of the Divine is perfected. At another place it is said:

وَكَأْسٍ مِنْ مَعْنِينِ ۝ لَا يُصَدَّعُونَ عَنْهَا وَلَا يُنْزِفُونَ ۝²²⁴
 لَا يَسْمَعُونَ فِيهَا لَغْوًا وَلَا تَأْثِيمًا ۝ إِلَّا ذِكْرًا سَلَامًا ۝²²⁵
 وَجُودًا يَوْمَئِذٍ نَاظِرَةً ۝ إِلَى رَبِّهَا نَاظِرَةً ۝²²⁶

²²² Al-Dahr, 76:22 [Publisher]

²²³ Al-Dahr, 76:6-7 [Publisher]

²²⁴ Al-Wāqī‘ah, 56:19-20 [Publisher]

²²⁵ Al-Wāqī‘ah, 56:26-27 [Publisher]

وَمَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَىٰ فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَىٰ وَأَضَلُّ سَبِيلًا ۝²²⁷

The cups of purifying wine which will be like pure and limpid water will be offered to the dwellers of paradise. This wine will be free from all defects like headache, stupefaction and drunkenness.

They will not hear therein any vain, frivolous or sinful talk, but only the salutation: “Peace, peace” which is a sign of compassion, love and happiness will be heard on all sides.

On that day faces of the believers will be fresh and handsome. They will behold their Lord.

He who is blind in this world shall be blind in the hereafter and even more astray.

These verses show that the wine of paradise has no relationship or resemblance with the wines of this world. Indeed, in all its qualities it is opposed to these wines. Nowhere is it stated in the Holy Qur’ān that like the wines of the world it will be made from grapes or molasses or the bark of acacia or any other physical substance. It is repeatedly said that the essence of that wine is the love and understanding of the Divine which a believer takes with him from this world. It is a Divine mystery that that spiritual condition will appear like wine. To those who possess insight, this mystery is revealed in visions and wise people arrive at its reality through other signs.

²²⁶ Al-Qiyāmah, 75:23-24 [Publisher]

²²⁷ Banī Isrā’īl, 17:73 [Publisher]

The personification of spiritual matters in physical forms has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān at several places, as, for instance, that the glorification of God will be personified like fruit-bearing trees and good actions will appear as pure and clear streams.

[Surmah Chashm Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 150-157]

The Wrath of God has a Spiritual Philosophy

The Holy Qur'ān does not describe the wrath of God Almighty as it is described in the Vedās. Rather, the wrath described in the Holy Qur'ān has spiritual philosophy. For instance, regarding the nature of Divine punishment, the Holy Qur'ān says:

تَارُ الْمَوْتَةُ ۝ الَّتِي تَطْلُعُ عَلَى الْأَفْعِدَةِ ۝²²⁸

What is hell? It is the fire which sets the hearts ablaze.

It means that when a person develops corrupt ideas in his heart, which are opposed to the perfection for which man has been created, then as one who is hungry and thirsty dies from lack of food and water, in the same way, the one who is occupied with corrupt ideas and is deprived of God's love and of obedience to Him, which are like food and water, also dies. Thus according to the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān, a person himself prepares the means of his destruction and is not in any way forced by God. For instance, when a person shuts all the windows of his room and leaves none of them open, doubtless his room will become dark. The shutting of the windows is his action and making the room dark is God's action according to the law of nature. In the same way, when a person commits a sin God Almighty thereafter manifests His

²²⁸ Al-Humazah, 104:7-8 [Publisher]

action which becomes the punishment of the sin. Yet God does not shut the door of repentance, as when the occupant of a dark room opens a window God Almighty pours light into the room.

Thus according to the Holy Qur'ān, the wrath of God does not mean that He becomes angry by bringing about an undesirable change in His condition. When a person is angry, he falls into distress and feels a sort of pain and loses his happiness, but God is always happy and suffers no distress. His wrath means that as He is Holy, He does not desire that His servants should adopt ways of impurity and demands that impurity should be swept away. If a person persists in impurity, God, the Holy, deprives him of His grace which is the basis of life and joy and comfort and that condition becomes the source of torment for the disobedient one. This might be illustrated as the case of a garden which is irrigated by the water of a stream but when the owners of the garden give up obeying the owner of the stream, the latter dams up the water of the stream and deprives the garden of it so that it dries up.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 62-63]

Hell is Not Everlasting

It is unreasonable and is contrary to the perfect attributes of God, the Glorious, that once a person has been condemned to hell, only the Divine attributes of chastisement should be manifested in his case and the attributes of mercy and forgiveness should be suspended forever and should not come into operation. From what God Almighty has said in His Book, it appears that those condemned to hell shall dwell therein for a long period which is metaphorically described as forever, but then

the attribute of mercy will be manifested and, as is mentioned in a *Ḥadīth*, God will stretch forth His hand into hell and all those who fall into His grip will be taken out of hell. This *Ḥadīth* indicates that in the end all will attain salvation as the hand of God is unlimited and no one can be left out of it.

[Chashma Masīḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 369]

He who Devotes His Life to the Cause of God is a Martyr

There are many verses of the Holy Qur'ān and many *Aḥādīth*, which show that the souls of people who are pure enter paradise as soon as they die. There are several *Aḥādīth* that mention that the martyrs will eat of the fruits of paradise. Almighty Allāh says:

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ قُتِلُوا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ أَمْوَاتًا بَلْ أَحْيَاءٌ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ يُرْزَقُونَ²²⁹

Do not account those who are slain in the cause of Allāh as dead. Indeed, they are living in the presence of their Lord and are provided for.

Previous Books also support this. This proves that the souls of the pure will enter paradise. Now paradise will contain physical bounties of diverse types and fruits of many kinds and entry into paradise means that those bounties should be availed of. In such case the entry of the soul alone into paradise is meaningless and useless. Will the soul enter paradise and yet not be able to avail itself of its bounties? The verse:

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي²³⁰

²²⁹ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:170 [Publisher]

²³⁰ ‘And enter thou My Garden.’—Al-Fajr, 89:31 [Publisher]

clearly shows that a believer is invested with a body after death. All great Muslim thinkers are agreed that pure believers are invested with a holy and bright body as soon as they die, through which they enjoy the bounties of paradise. To confine paradise at that stage to martyrs alone would amount to disbelief. Can a true believer commit such impertinence as to affirm that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) under whose grave paradise lies, is outside paradise, but those who acquired faith and righteousness through him and became martyrs are dwelling in paradise and are eating of its fruits? The truth is that he who devotes his life to the cause of God is a martyr and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) is the first of martyrs.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 388-390]

An objection is raised that if every pure believer who is not burdened with sin enters paradise immediately on death, this would mean a rejection of resurrection and all its accompanying conditions, inasmuch as, according to the verse:

وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرَجِينَ²³¹

their departing from paradise is not permissible. Thus, the whole system of resurrection and the events relating to the hereafter would be nullified.

The answer is that the Holy Qur'ān teaches that pure believers enter paradise immediately on death and also teaches that there will be resurrection of the body and the dead will be revived and we believe in both. The only difference is that the entry into paradise on death is a

²³¹ 'Nor shall they ever be ejected therefrom.'—Al-Ḥijr, 15:49
[Publisher]

general condition and the bodies that are bestowed on the believers immediately on death are imperfect. The day of the resurrection of the bodies is the day of the grand manifestation. On that day perfect bodies will be bestowed, but the connection of the dwellers of paradise with paradise will not be interrupted. From one aspect they will be in paradise, and from another aspect they will face God Almighty.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyya, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 387, footnote]

Three Grades of Heaven and Hell

Heaven and hell have three grades. The **first grade**, which is imperfect, begins when a person departing from this world enters his grave. This grade has been metaphorically described in the *Aḥādīth* in several ways. One way is that for a righteous person a window is opened in the grave towards heaven through which he observes the splendour of heaven and enjoys its breezes. The size of this window corresponds to the grade of the faith or actions of the dead person. It is also recorded that those who leave the world in a condition in which they are wholly lost in God and who lay down their lives in the cause of the Beloved like the martyrs and *Ṣiddīqs*, who are even ahead of the martyrs, for them it is not merely a window that is opened into heaven, but they enter heaven with the whole of their beings and faculties. Nevertheless, they do not enjoy the delights of heaven to a perfect degree before the Day of Judgement.

In the same way, for the dead body of a wicked person a window is opened in the grave towards hell through which a consuming vapour arrives in the grave from hell and that wicked soul burns all the time in its flames. But for those who depart from the world in such condition

that, on account of their persistent disobedience, they are wholly lost in Satan and in obedience to him they cut asunder altogether from God, it is not only a window that is opened for them after their death towards hell, they are cast into hell with their whole being and all faculties, as God has said:

مِمَّا خَطِيئَتُهُمْ أُعْرِقُوا فَأَذْخَلُوا نَارًا²³²

Nevertheless, they are not subjected to the full torment of hell before the Day of Judgement.

There is a **second stage** of entry into heaven and hell which should be called the intermediate stage, which is attained after the resurrection, but before entry into the great heaven or the great hell. In this grade the faculties are sharpened and the manifestation of God's mercy or His wrath is observed in a perfect way, and the delights of heaven or the torments of hell are felt more strongly on account of the nearness of the great heaven or the great hell, as God the Glorious, has said:

وَأُزْلِفَتِ الْجَنَّةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ ۝ وَبُرِّزَتِ الْجَحِيمُ لِلْغَافِلِينَ ۝²³³
 وَجُودُهُ يَوْمَ مَرْحَةٍ مُسْفِرَةٌ ۝ ضَاحِكَةٌ مُسْتَبْشِرَةٌ ۝ وَجُودُهُ يَوْمَ مَرْحَةٍ عَلَيْهَا عَذَابٌ
 تَرْهَقُهَا قَتَرَةٌ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرَةُ الْفَجِرَةُ²³⁴

In this second grade also people are not equal. There are those of a high grade who are accompanied by heavenly

²³² 'Because of their sins they were drowned and made to enter Fire.'—Nūh, 71:26 [Publisher]

²³³ 'And Heaven shall be brought near to the righteous; and Hell shall be opened to those who have gone astray.'—Al-Shu'arā', 26:91-92 [Publisher]

²³⁴ 'On that day some faces will be bright, laughing, joyous! and some faces, on that day, will have dust upon them, darkness will cover them. Those are the ones that disbelieved and were wicked.'—'Abasa, 80:39-43 [Publisher]

lights. Allāh the Glorious refers to them in the verse:

نُورُهُمْ يَمْشِي بَيْنَ أَيْدِيهِمْ وَبِأَيْمَانِهِمْ²³⁵

In the same way, there are great disbelievers in whose hearts a fire is kindled before they enter completely into hell, as Allāh the Glorious says:

نَارُ اللَّهِ الْمُوقَدَةُ الَّتِي تَطَّلِعُ عَلَى الْأَفْئِدَةِ²³⁶

Above this second grade is a **third grade**, which is the last of the grades which people will enter after the Day of Judgement and will enjoy or suffer in a complete and perfect manner. In these three grades a person is in a type of heaven or hell, and in none of these grades is he excluded from heaven or hell. From one grade he progresses into another.

One of the ways of such progress is that, for instance, a person dies in a low condition of faith and action and a small hole is made for him towards heaven as his capacity for the manifestation of heaven is limited to that much. Thereafter, if he leaves behind righteous progeny, who supplicate earnestly for his forgiveness and for that purpose give alms to the poor or, if he had love for a man of God who supplicates earnestly for his forgiveness, or he has left behind him some project which is of public benefit, then by the blessing of these good actions that are carried on his behalf, the window that is opened for him towards heaven widens daily and this process is accelerated by the Divine pronouncement: *My mercy outruns My wrath*; till the window becomes a wide gate

²³⁵ 'Their light will run before them and on their right hands.'—Al-Tahrīm, 66:9 [Publisher]

²³⁶ 'It is Allāh's kindled fire which leaps at hearts.'—Al-Humazah, 104:7-8 [Publisher]

and he enters heaven like the martyrs and *Ṣiddīqs*....

God Almighty has made so much provision for the widening of this window that it appears clear that His purpose is that if anyone travels towards Him with a particle of faith and action that particle will be constantly nurtured. If by any chance all sources of good that should reach a dead person from this world are unavailable, at least this source remains available that God Almighty has imperatively commanded all believers and pious people and martyrs and *Ṣiddīqs* that they should most sincerely supplicate for the forgiveness of those of their brethren who have passed on from this world. It is thus obvious that a supplication that is made by a host of believers will not be in vain, but will work daily to widen the window that was opened towards heaven for the sinful believers who had died. These supplications have so far widened numberless windows so that countless persons have entered paradise who were bestowed in the early days only a small window for the contemplation of heaven.

In this age some of the Muslims are under the misconception that only the martyrs will enter heaven immediately after death and that all other believers, including Prophets and Messengers, will remain outside heaven till the Day of Judgement and that only a window will be opened for them towards heaven. They have not considered that all Prophets and *Ṣiddīqs* are spiritually superior to martyrs and that being kept away from paradise is a type of torment which cannot be contemplated for those who have been forgiven. Can one concerning whom God Almighty has said:

237 رَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ

remain behind the martyrs in good fortune and the achievement of his purpose? It is a pity that through their lack of intelligence, these people have reversed the law. They conceive that the first entrants into heaven will be the martyrs and that the turn of the Prophets and *Ṣiddīqs* would arrive after countless years. These people are guilty of great disrespect and can derive no benefit from vain excuses. Everyone can understand that those who are foremost in faith and action should be the first to enter heaven and not that they should only have a window opened for them like those who are weak of faith, and that the martyrs should have access to all the fruits of heaven as soon as they die. If entry into heaven depends upon perfect faith, perfect sincerity and perfect devotion, then there is no one who is ahead of the Prophets and *Ṣiddīqs*, whose whole life is so devoted to God Almighty that they are like the dead and yearn that they should be martyred in the cause of Allāh, and be revived and be martyred again, and be revived and be martyred again.

It is thus clear that there is such great provision for entry into heaven that almost all believers will enter it completely before the Day of Judgement and that the Day of Judgement will not expel them from heaven, but will bring it even nearer. From the illustration of the window, it should be realized how heaven is brought near to the grave. This does not mean that heaven is brought physically close to the grave. It is brought spiritually near. In this way, the dwellers of paradise will be spiritually present in the Day of Judgement and will also be in

²³⁷ 'Some of them He exalted by degrees of rank.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:254 [Publisher]

paradise. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allāh be on him) has said: Heaven is under my grave. This is worth reflecting upon.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 282-286]

18

THE PURPOSE OF CREATION

Though different people, on account of their short-sightedness or lack of courage, appoint various types of objectives for their lives and stop short at worldly purposes and desires, yet the purpose that God Almighty has specified in His Holy Word is:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ²³⁸

I have created jinn and men so that they should recognize and worship Me.

According to this verse the true purpose of human life is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and devotion to Him.

Only the Creator can Enjoin the Purpose of Life

It is obvious that it is not open to man that he should himself lay down the purpose of his life by his own authority inasmuch as man does not arrive in the world of his own will, nor will he depart from this world of his own will. He is a created being and He Who created him and bestowed upon him better and higher faculties than those bestowed upon other animates, has enjoined a purpose for his life. Whether anyone comprehends that purpose or not, without doubt the purpose of man's creation is the worship and understanding of God Almighty and to lose himself in Him.

²³⁸ Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:57 [Publisher]

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, p. 414]

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا²³⁹

This means that the Divine Trust, by which is meant the love of God and complete obedience to Him even in the face of hardship, was offered to the angels and the whole of creation and the mountains, all apparently full of strength, but they all refused to undertake it, being afraid of its grandeur. But man undertook it for he possessed two qualities, that he could force himself in the cause of God Almighty and could advance so far in love of Him as to forget altogether everything else.

[Taufīh-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 75-76]

The Three Objects of Life

The real purpose of all the external and internal limbs and faculties that have been bestowed on man is understanding and worship and love of God. That is why, despite a thousand occupations, man does not find his true well-being except in God Almighty. Having acquired great wealth, or achieved high office, or having become a great merchant, or having acquired governing authority, or become a great philosopher, he departs in the end from these worldly involvements with a sense of frustration. His heart rebukes him all the time about his deep concern with the world and his conscience never approves his wiles and deceits and wrongful actions. This problem can be appreciated in another way. The purpose of the creation of a thing is determined by its highest achievement beyond which its faculties cannot rise. For

²³⁹ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:73 [Publisher]

instance, the highest a bullock is capable of is ploughing, or irrigation, or transportation, and therefore these are the purpose of its life and it cannot rise above them. But when we take stock of man's faculties and powers to discover his highest capacity, we find that he is invested with the faculty of seeking after God so much so that he desires that he should become so devoted to God's love that he should have nothing of his own and that everything should become God's. He shares his natural needs like food and drink and rest with other animates, and in industry some animals are ahead of him; for instance, the bees produce such excellent honey from every type of flower that man has so far not been able to compete with them. It is clear, therefore, that the highest capacity of man is meeting with God Almighty and thus the true purpose of his life is that the window of his heart should open towards God.

How to Achieve the Purpose of Life

The question is how and through what means can man achieve this purpose?

First Means

Let it be clear that the principal means for achieving this purpose is the correct recognition of and faith in the True God. If this first step is wrongly taken and a person sets up a bird, or an animal, or any of the elements, or a human being as his god, it cannot be expected that his subsequent steps would be taken along the straight path. The True God helps His seekers; but that which is dead cannot help the dead. Allāh the Glorious has illustrated this point beautifully in this verse:

لَهُ دَعْوَةُ الْحَقِّ وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِنْ دُونِهِ لَا يَسْتَجِيبُونَ لَهُمْ بِشَيْءٍ إِلَّا كَبَاسِطٍ

كَفَيْهِ إِلَى الْمَاءِ لِيَبْلُغَ فَاهُ وَمَا هُوَ بِمَارِيحِهِ وَمَا دُعَاءُ الْكَافِرِينَ إِلَّا فِي ضَلَالٍ²⁴⁰

Worthy of worship alone is the same true God Who is Omnipotent. Those on whom they call for help beside Him, do not respond to them at all. Their case is like that of one who stretches forth his hands towards water and ask it to enter his mouth. But will it come do so? Not at all. Thus all the prayers of those who are not cognizant of the True God are futile.

Second Means

The second means of achieving the true purpose of life is to become aware of the perfect beauty of God Almighty, for beauty is something which naturally attracts the hearts and generates love. The beauty of God Almighty is His Unity and His Greatness and His other attributes, as the Holy Qur'ān says:

قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ ۝ اللَّهُ الصَّمَدُ ۝ لَمْ يَلِدْ ۖ وَلَمْ يُولَدْ ۝
وَلَمْ يَكُنْ لَهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ²⁴¹

This means that, in His Being and His attributes and His Glory, God is One without associate. All are dependent upon Him and every particle derives its life from Him. He is the Source of grace for everything and receives no grace from anything. He is neither a son nor a father for none is equal to Him.

The Holy Qur'ān repeatedly draws attention to God's perfection and greatness and points out that such God is the Besought of all hearts and not one who is dead or weak or lacks mercy or power.

²⁴⁰ Al-Ra'ḍ, 13:15 [Publisher]

²⁴¹ Al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:2-5 [Publisher]

Third Means

The third means of achieving the purpose of life is to become aware of the benevolence of God Almighty for love is generated by beauty and benevolence. The benevolent attributes of God Almighty are set forth briefly in the *Sūrah Fātiḥah*, where it is said:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝ مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ۝²⁴²

It is obvious that the perfection of benevolence consists in that God Almighty created His servants from nothing and thereafter His Providence was bestowed upon them and He became the support of everything, and all types of His mercy were manifested for His servants. His benevolence is without limit and beyond count as is repeatedly set forth in the Holy Qur'ān, as, for instance:

وَاِنْ تَعَدُّوا نِعْمَتَ اللّٰهِ لَا تُحْصَوْهَا²⁴³

If you try to number the bounties of Allāh, you will certainly not be able to count them.

Fourth Means

The fourth means of achieving the true purpose is Prayer, as is said:

اُدْعُوْنِيْٓ اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ²⁴⁴

You pray and I shall accept your prayer.

There is repeated urge towards Prayer, so that man should achieve his purpose not through his own power,

²⁴² ‘All praise belongs to Allāh, Lord of all the worlds, The Gracious, the Merciful, Master of the Day of Judgement.’—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2-4 [Publisher]

²⁴³ Ibrāhīm, 14:35 [Publisher]

²⁴⁴ Al-Mu'min, 40:61 [Publisher]

but through God's power.

Fifth Means

The fifth means of achieving the purpose of life is striving in the cause of Allāh with one's property and one's faculties and one's life and one's reason, as He says:

جَاهِدُوا بِأَمْوَالِكُمْ وَأَنْفُسِكُمْ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ²⁴⁵
وَمِمَّا ذَرَرْتُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ²⁴⁶
وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا²⁴⁷

Dedicate in the path of Allāh your possessions, your lives, and your selves to their fullest capacity.

And devote to the Divine cause all that you have been granted by God including reason, knowledge, understanding and skill.

And those who strive after Us in every way, We guide them along the paths that lead to Us.

Sixth Means

The sixth means for achieving the purpose of life is steadfastness; that is to say, that a seeker should not become tired and should not be daunted by trials, as Allāh the Exalted says:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ
أَلَّا يَتَخَفُوا وَلَا تَهْزِنُوا وَأَبْشِرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ○

²⁴⁵ Al-Tauba, 9:41 [Publisher]

²⁴⁶ Al-Baqarah, 2:4 [Publisher]

²⁴⁷ Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:70 [Publisher]

تَمْنُ أَوْلِيَّوْكُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ²⁴⁸

On them who affirm: Our Lord is Allāh; and then remain steadfast, angels descend, re-assuring them: Fear not, nor grieve, and rejoice in the Garden that you were promised. We are your friends in this life and in the hereafter.

This is an indication that the pleasure of God Almighty is won through steadfastness. It is true that steadfastness is more than a miracle. Perfect steadfastness is that one should find oneself surrounded on all sides by calamities and one should find one's life and honour in danger and nothing comforting should be available, so much so, that God Almighty should stop—by way of trials—the comforting visions and dreams and revelation and should leave one in the midst of terrifying fears, but that at such a time, one should not abandon courage and should not step back like a coward and should not let one's fidelity be weakened. One's sincerity and loyalty should not be shaken, one should be pleased with the humiliation, one should be reconciled to death, one should not await the support of a friend, one should not seek glad tidings from God, because of one's delicate situation, and one should stand up straight despite helplessness and weakness and the lack of every comfort. One should stretch forth one's neck, saying: Whatever is to happen, let it happen; one should face courageously whatever has been determined and one should not be impatient nor complain till the trial is over. This is the steadfastness the reward of which is God. This is the quality by virtue of which the dust of Messengers, Prophets, *Siddiqs* and martyrs is still so fragrant. This is indicated by the Glorious God in the

²⁴⁸ Ḥā Mīm Sajdah, 41:31-32 [Publisher]

prayer:

249 اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ

meaning, O Allāh! show us the path of steadfastness by treading along which one wins Thy bounties and favours and Thou art pleased.

This is also indicated in another verse:

250 رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا وَتَوَقَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ

meaning, Lord: at this time of trial send down upon our hearts the comfort that should make us steadfast and do Thou so ordain that we should die in a state of submission to Thee;

At the time of trials and misfortune, God Almighty causes a light to descend upon the hearts of those who are dear to Him, being strengthened by which they face misfortunes calmly and, out of the sweetness of their faith, they kiss the chains that are put round their feet in His cause. When calamities descend upon a man of God and signs of death appear, he does not contend with his Lord that He might be safeguarded against them, inas-much as to persist at such a time in supplications for security amounts to fighting God Almighty and is contrary to complete submission. A true lover advances forward at a time of calamity and holding life as nothing, and saying goodbye to love of it, submits himself completely to the will of his Lord and seeks only His pleasure. Concerning such people, God the Glorious says:

251 وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ

249 Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

250 Al-A‘rāf, 7:127 [Publisher]

251 Al-Baqarah, 2:208 [Publisher]

It means that the man of God dedicates his life in the path of God and, in return, earns the pleasure of Allāh. These are the people who receive the special mercy of Allāh.

In short, this indeed is the spirit of the steadfastness which we have described and which leads to the God. Let him who wills, grasp this point.

Seventh Means

The seventh means of achieving the purpose of life is keeping company with the righteous and to follow their example. One of the needs of the advent of Prophets is that man naturally seeks a perfect example, for it fosters eagerness and resolve. He who does not follow a good example becomes slothful and goes astray. This is indicated by Allāh the Glorious in the verses:

كُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ²⁵²
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ²⁵³

Keep company with the righteous, and adopt the path of those on whom Allāh's favours have been bestowed before you.

Eighth Means

The eighth means of achieving the purpose of life are pure visions and dreams and revelation from God Al-mighty. To travel towards God is to tread upon a very delicate path which is attended by diverse types of calamities and sufferings. It is possible that a person may be overtaken by forgetfulness in pursuing this unfamiliar

²⁵² Al-Tauba, 9:119 [Publisher]

²⁵³ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

path or may give up hope and should abandon further advance. Therefore, the mercy of God Almighty seeks to comfort him in his progress in this journey and strengthen his heart and to uphold his resolve and to increase his eagerness. Thus it is God's way that from time to time he comforts those who are voyaging along this path with His revelation and manifests to them that He is with them. Thus strengthened, they perform this journey with great eagerness. He has said:

لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ²⁵⁴

There are several other means for achieving the purpose of life which the Holy Qur'ān has set out, but considerations of space forbid us from setting them out here.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 415-422]

Worship Benefits Man Himself

Question:²⁵⁵ God Almighty being Gracious and Benevolent, His direction that man should worship Him is for the benefit of man and not that it adds in any way to God's honour.

Answer: It is true that through the worship of God man's own welfare is intended, yet the *Rubūbiyyat* of God Almighty demands that by avoiding evil and devoting himself to His worship and obedience, man should achieve his good fortune. If man does not wish to follow that path His wrath is aroused not for His own sake, but

²⁵⁴ 'For them are glad tidings in the present life and also in the hereafter.'—Yūnus, 10:65 [Publisher]

²⁵⁵ This extract is from the debate held in 1886 between the Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad (the Promised Messiah), and Lāla Murlīdhar, an Āryā Samājist. [Publisher]

for the sake of man and He subjects man to diverse types of warnings and admonitions. If man still does not take heed, he is consumed in the fire of rejection and of despair. It is not permissible that anyone should say to Him: Why do You bother about what would harm me or benefit me? Why do You admonish us and send revealed Books and punish us? If we worship You, it would be for our own good and if we do not worship You, we shall suffer loss. Why should You worry? Should anyone say that, and indeed if the whole world and all mankind were to supplicate Him that He should spare them His admonitions and commandments and revealed Books, and that they do not desire paradise, but would be content with this world and should be left forever to it, that they do not desire the great bounties of the hereafter, that He should not interfere with their actions and should abstain from planning rewards and punishments for them and should not concern Himself with their benefit or their loss, their supplication would not be granted even if they continued to submit it throughout their lives with crying and weeping. It is not enough that a person is free and worships God for his own benefit and that *Permeshwar* has no concern with it, but the Glory and Greatness of God demand that man should carry out the worship of God and should follow the ways of goodness. His Godhead naturally demands that the signs of servitude should be manifested before Him and His perfection demands that man should humble himself in His presence. That is the reason why in the end His chastisement overtakes the disobedient, the vicious and those who persist in wrong-doing. His Blessed Being has eternally possessed the power to award reward and impose punishment; otherwise, He would not occupy Himself

awarding good recompense to the virtuous and ill recompense to the vicious. Were it not for His attribute of awarding recompense, He would have kept silent and abstained altogether from bestowing recompense. Therefore, though it is true that the harm or benefit of man's actions reverts to him and the greatness and kingdom of God Almighty are neither increased nor decreased thereby, yet it is true and is a firm verity that His attribute of *Rubūbiyyat* demands that His servants should be firmly established in their position of His worshippers, and that if anyone should raise his head in the slightest degree out of arrogance, his head be immediately smashed. In short, there is a demand in God's Being for the manifestation of His Greatness, His Godhead, His Supremacy, His Glory and His Kingdom, and recompense and the requirement of obedience and servitude and worship are the consequences of that very demand. For the manifestation of His *Rubūbiyyat* and Godhead, He has created this variegated world. Had His Being been free from this desire of manifestation, why should He have addressed Himself to creation at all? Who had coerced Him that He should create the universe and by establishing a relationship between souls and bodies should make this world the manifestation of His wonderful powers? He must have possessed a power of determination that moved Him to the creation of the universe. There are indications in His Holy Word, the Qur'ān, which show that God Almighty created the universe so that He should be recognized through His attribute of creation, and after creation He showered His mercy and benevolence upon the world so that He should be recognized through His mercy and benevolence. In the same way, He instituted punishment and reward so that

His attributes of retribution and bounty might be recognized. After death, He will raise up mankind again so that He might be recognized as All-Powerful. His purpose in all His wonderful works is that He should be recognized. Thus, by the creation of the world and by the system of recompense, what is desired is the understanding of God, which is the essence of worship. This proves that God Almighty Himself demands that His creatures should attain His understanding, the perfect reality of which is known through worship. As a beauteous one on account of the perfection of his beauty desires to display it, so God Almighty, Who possesses to perfection the reality of beauty, desires that His excellence should be disclosed to people. This proves that God Almighty demands worship which is the basis and means of recognition from His servants and His supremacy attends to the destruction of one who opposes His desire and denies His worship and turns away from it. If you reflect over the world and observe carefully that which God Almighty has hitherto meted out to rebels and non-believers and that which He has always done to the faithless ones and the wrong-doers, you would realize that without doubt it is an established verity that God Almighty, by the demand of His Being, loves goodness and hates evil and is at enmity with it. He desires that people should discard vice and should adopt goodness, and though goodness or evil, which man practices, does not in any way interfere with God's kingdom, yet that is His demand. It is thus obvious that if God Almighty had not created the souls, He would have no right to demand from any soul why it did not render to Him that perfect worship that is due to one's Creator.

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**THE ESSENCE OF
ISLĀM
VOLUME III**

Extracts from the Writings, Speeches,
Announcements and Discourses of the
Promised Messiah
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
of Qādiān
[May peace be upon him]

Published under the auspices of
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad
Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah
[May Allah be his help]

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**A rendering into English of Extracts from the writings,
speeches, announcements and discourses of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā
Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, the Promised Messiah and
Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Community.**

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PUBLISHER’S NOTE

“The Essence of Islām” is an English rendering of extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān (peace be on him). Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} claimed that he was the same Messiah and Imām Mahdī whose advent had been prophesied for latter days, not only in Islām but also in other faiths.

The original compilation, in Urdu, Arabic and Persian, from which these extracts have been rendered into English, was collated with great care and diligence by the late Syed Mīr Dāwūd Aḥmad, may Allah reward him for his great labour of love. He published his selection in the form of a book, *Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiāni, alaihis-salāto wassalām, apnī tehrīroḥ kī rū sei*, or ‘Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} of Qādiān, according to his writings’.

The original English translation was done by Ḥaḍrat Chaudhry Muḥammad Zafrullāh Khān^{ra}, a companion of the Promised Messiah (peace be on him) who achieved great distinction as a statesman, jurist and scholar of comparative religious studies. Volume I and II were published by the London Mosque in 1979 and 1981 respectively during the lifetime of the revered translator. He also prepared the manuscripts of volumes three and four but these could not be published during his lifetime.

Second editions of volume one and two were published in 2004. We are now happy to present the third volume of “The Essence of Islām,” which is being published for the first time. This volume sets out an English rendering of the words of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} himself,

in exposition of these important topics:

- NATURAL, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL STATES OF MAN
- FAITH, CERTAINTY AND INSIGHT
- EFFORT AND NATURAL APTITUDE
- THE NEED FOR PROPHETS
- PROPHETHOOD IN ISLĀM
- THE MESSIAH AND HIS SECOND COMING
- DAJJĀL OR THE ANTICHRIST
- DHULQARNAIN
- GOG AND MAGOG
- WOMEN
- THE VEIL
- PROPER UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN
- REPEATED CHALLENGES

Under the direction of Vakālat-e-Taṣnīf, London, the translation was compared with the original text and compiled by Mr. Munawar Aḥmed Sa‘eed with the support of the translation team working in Masjid Baitur Raḥmān in USA. In addition to those listed in the Publishers’ Note of Volume I, three members who rendered valuable services for this volume are: Aḥmad Ṭāriq, Ḥāris Aḥmad and Nāṣir M. Malik. The publishers would like to express their appreciation for the help and support provided by Maulānā Munīr-ud-Dīn Shams, Additional Vakīl-ut-Taṣnīf, who supervised the project and provided the vital link for seeking guidance from Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ṭāhīr Aḥmad, Khalīfatul Masīḥ IV^{rh} and Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalīfatul Masīḥ V (May Allah be his help). In

Rabwah, Vakālat-e-Taṣnīf, headed by Professor Chaudhry Muḥammad ‘Alī reviewed the document, helped in incorporating the verses of the Holy Qur’ān and Urdu and Persian texts, and provided guidance in translating some difficult parts.

The system used for references is the same as adopted in Volumes I and II. All references, unless otherwise noted, are from the Holy Qur’ān. In the text, the references to the Holy Qur’ān are given exactly as they were given in the original writings. In the footnotes, references are given in the modern numerical system. In these references, we have counted *Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm* as the first verse and have used the numerical system in which the first number refers to the *Sūrah* (chapter) and the second number refers to the *Āyah* (verse).

References to the Books of the Promised Messiah^{as} are based on the London Edition of the Rūḥānī Khazā’in published in 1984. References to Malfūzāt and Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt are also based on the London edition.

The following abbreviations have been used in this booklet, Readers are requested to recite the full salutations when reading the book:

sa. An abbreviation for *ṣal-lallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam*, meaning “May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him,” is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}.

as. An abbreviation for *‘alaihis salām*, meaning “May peace be upon him,” is written after the name of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

ra. An abbreviation for raḍi-Allāho ‘anhu/‘anhā/‘anhum meaning, “May Allah be pleased with him/her/them,” is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

rh. An abbreviation for *rahimahullāh*, meaning, “May Allah have mercy on him,” is written after the names of deceased pious Muslims who are not Companions.

In transliterating Arabic words we have followed the following system adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ا | at the beginning of a word, pronounced as a, i, u preceded by a very slight aspiration, like h in the English word ‘honour’. |
| ث | <i>th</i> , pronounced like <i>th</i> in the English word ‘thing’. |
| ح | <i>h</i> , a guttural aspirate, stronger than h. |
| خ | <i>kh</i> , pronounced like the Scotch ch in ‘loch’. |
| ذ | <i>dh</i> , pronounced like the English th in ‘that’. |
| ص | <i>ṣ</i> , strongly articulated s. |
| ض | <i>ḍ</i> , similar to the English th in ‘this’. |
| ط | <i>t</i> , strongly articulated palatal t. |
| ظ | <i>ẓ</i> , strongly articulated z. |
| ع | ‘, a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear. |
| غ | <i>gh</i> , a sound approached very nearly in the r ‘ <i>grasseye</i> ’ in French, and in the German r. It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the ‘gargling’ position whilst pronouncing it. |
| ق | <i>q</i> , a deep guttural k sound. |

ئ , a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by *a* for — (like *u* in 'bud'); *i* for — (like *i* in 'bid'); *u* for — (like *oo* in 'wood'); the long vowels by *ā* for — or *ī* (like *a* in 'father'); *ī* for — or — (like *ee* in 'deep'); *ai* for — (like *i* in 'site')*; *ū* for و — (like *oo* in 'root'); *au* for و — (resembling *ou* in 'sound').

Please note that in transliterated words the letter 'e' is to be pronounced as in 'prey' which rhymes with 'day'; however the pronunciation is flat without the element of English diphthong. If in Urdu and Persian words 'e' is lengthened a bit more it is transliterated as 'ei' to be pronounced as 'ei' in 'feign' without the element of diphthong thus 'ے' is transliterated as 'Kei'. For the nasal sound of 'n' we have used the symbol 'ñ'. Thus Urdu word 'میں' would be transliterated as 'meiñ'.

The consonants not included above have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

Please also note that the words in the text in normal brackets () and in between the long dashes — are the words of the Promised Messiah^{as} and if any explanatory words or phrases are added by the publisher for the purpose of clarification, they are put in square brackets [].

* In Arabic words like شيخ (Shaikh) there is an element of diphthong which is missing when the word is pronounced in Urdu.

* These transliterations are not included in the system of transliteration by Royal Asiatic Society. [Publisher]

May Allah accept our humble efforts and make this blessed task a source of guidance for many. Āmīn.

The Publishers

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

1

NATURAL, MORAL AND SPIRITUAL STATES OF MAN

The Holy Qur'ān has bestowed a singular favour on the world by distinguishing between the natural state of man and his high moral qualities. It does not rest content with transporting man from the natural state to high moral qualities, but it further opens the doors to pure insight which lead to the stage of spiritual states. Indeed, it has helped millions of people reach that stage.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 367-368]

The Three Human States

The first question is about the distinction between the natural, moral and spiritual states of man. The Holy Qur'ān has so distinguished between them that it has indicated three separate sources for each of them. In other words, it has pointed out the three springs from which these states respectively flow.

The First Source—the Self that Incites to Evil

The first spring, which is the source of all natural states, is designated by the Holy Qur'ān as *Nafs-e-Ammārah* [the self that incites to evil], as it says:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ¹

This means that it is a characteristic of *Nafs-e-Ammārah* that it incites man to evil—which is contrary to his excellence, and goes against his moral condition—and seeks to lead him to undesirable and sinful ways. Thus, to be drawn towards intemperance and evil is the natural state which dominates man until the moral state takes over and he begins to be guided by reason and understanding. Until that happens, he continues to follow his natural instincts in eating, drinking, sleeping, walking, anger and emotion etc. When, under the direction of reason and understanding, he begins to control his natural states and creates a balance, it is at this point that the three states cease to be natural and come to be known as moral, as we shall elaborate later.

The Second Source: The Self-Reproaching Self

The source of moral state, according to the Holy Qur’ān, is *Nafs-e-Lawwāmah* [the self-reproaching self.] Allah says in the Holy Qur’ān:

وَلَا أُقْسِمُ بِالنَّفْسِ اللَّوَّامَةِ²

This means that: ‘I call to witness the self which reproaches itself over misdeeds and all acts of intemperance.’

Nafs-e-Lawwāmah [the self-reproaching self] is the second source of human states; it gives birth to moral conditions and, at this stage, man is emancipated from his resemblance to animals. In the above verse, *Nafs-e-Lawwāmah* has been called to witness for the purpose of

¹ Yūsuf, 12:54 [Publisher]

² Al-Qiyāmah, 75:3 [Publisher]

dignifying it. Which means that because of his progress from *Nafs-e-Ammārah* to *Nafs-e-Lawwāmah*, a person becomes worthy of being admitted to Divine presence. It is called ‘self-reproaching’ because it rebukes man on vice and does not approve of him following his natural inclinations and leading the life of animals. It desires that he should adopt good conduct, exhibit good morals, display no intemperance and that his natural emotions and desires should be manifested under the direction of reason. As it rebukes man over vice, it is called the self-reproaching self. But although it does not approve of natural desires and rebukes itself, it does not have complete power to do good and is at times overcome by natural passions; hence it is likely to fall and stumble. It is very much like a frail child who does not want to fall, but falls because it is weak, and it is ashamed of its weakness. In short, this is the moral state which seeks to attain high moral qualities and is disgusted with being self-willed, yet it cannot assert itself completely.

The Third Source: The Soul at Rest

Then there is a third source, which signifies the beginning of the spiritual state. The Holy Qur’ān describes it as *Nafs-e-Muṭma’innah* [the soul at rest]; it says:

يَا أَيَّتُهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۝ اذْجِى إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مُّرْضِيَةً ۝
فَادْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ۝ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ۝³

(Part 30, Rukū‘ 14)

This means that: ‘O tranquil soul that has found peace in God, return to thy Lord well pleased with Him as He is well pleased with thee. Join My chosen servants and

³ Al-Fajr, 89:28-31 [Publisher]

enter My Paradise.’

This is the stage at which the soul, having been delivered from all weakness, is filled with spiritual strength and has such a relationship with God Almighty that it cannot live without Him. Just as water flows downwards and rushes forth because of its sheer volume, and removes all obstacles in its way, so does the soul flow towards God. It is to this state that the Divine injunction refers: ‘O soul that has found peace in God, return to Him.’ It brings about a great transformation, not only after death, but also in this very life, and is granted a paradise in this world even before the hereafter. As indicated in the above verse, such a soul is directed to return to its Lord the Nourisher, for He nurtures it. His love becomes its sustenance, and it drinks from the same life-giving spring. Thus it is delivered from death, as Almighty Allah says in the Holy Qur’ān:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۖ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۖ⁴

That is, He who cleanses his self of earthly passions shall be saved and will not perish, but he who is lost in such sensual desires shall lose hope in life.

In short, these are the three states, which may be called the natural, moral and spiritual states. Since natural urges become dangerous when aroused and very often destroy morality and spirituality, they have been described in the Holy Book of God Almighty as *Nafs-e-Ammārah* [the self that incites to evil.] If it is asked how the Holy Qur’ān affects these natural states of man and what guidance it furnishes about them, and to what extent it

⁴ Al-Shams, 91:10-11 [Publisher]

seeks to retain them, then let it be known that, according to the Holy Qur'ān, the physical states of man are closely related to his moral and spiritual states. Even a man's habits and his way of eating and drinking affect his moral and spiritual states. If the physical states are exercised under the direction of Divine law, then, just as everything becomes salty in a salt mine, these natural states become moral states and have a deep impact on spirituality. That is why the Holy Qur'ān has placed so much stress on physical cleanliness, proprieties and temperance in connection with all kinds of worship, as well as on inner purity for the purpose of attaining righteousness and humility.

When we ponder over it, it becomes clear that physical conditions deeply affect the soul. We can see that our outward actions, though apparently physical in nature, have a great effect on our spiritual condition. For instance, when our eyes shed tears, even if by way of affectation, the tears immediately affect the heart, which becomes sorrowful. In the same way, when we laugh, even if for show, the heart begins to feel cheerful. It is also observed that physical prostration generates humility in the soul, and when we strut about with our head raised and chest pushed out, this attitude generates a kind of arrogance and vanity. These illustrations demonstrate how physical conditions directly affect spiritual ones.

[Islāmī Uṣūl ki Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 316-320]

Natural and Moral States of Man

As indicated by the Holy Word of God Almighty, natural states, the source of which is *Nafs-e-Ammārah* [the self that incites to evil] are not something separate from moral states. The Holy Word of God has placed all

physical faculties, desires and urges under the category of natural states. These natural states, when consciously regulated, tempered and employed at the right time and place, become moral. In the same way, moral states are not something entirely distinct from spiritual states. Moral states become spiritual when they are combined with absolute devotion to God, complete purification of the self, cutting asunder from the world, turning wholly to God with perfect love, complete devotion, full serenity, contentment, and complete accord with Divine Will.

Natural states alone do not make man worthy of praise until they take on a moral complexion, because these states can also be found in other animals and even in physical matter. In the same way, adopting good morals does not bestow spiritual life upon man. A person who denies the existence of God can also exhibit good morals. To be meek or humble or peace loving or shunning evil or avoiding the evildoer, are all natural states. Even an unworthy person, who is entirely unacquainted with the true source of salvation, can attain these states. Many animals are pliable and through conditioning and training do learn to behave peacefully, so much so that they do not retaliate even after being badly beaten; yet you cannot call them human, let alone humans of a higher order. Likewise, a person who holds the worst of views and is even guilty of misconduct can also exhibit these qualities. It is possible that a person may learn to be merciful to such an extreme that he may not even permit himself to kill the germs that infest his own wounds; or he may be so mindful of preserving life that he may not wish to harm the lice in his hair or the worms that are generated in the stomach, intestines, or the brain. I can even imagine that a person may be moved by pity so much so that

he may even give up eating honey because it is obtained by destroying many lives and by driving away the poor bees from their hives. I can also conceive that a person may avoid using musk, as it is the blood of a poor deer and is obtained by killing the animal and separating it from its young. I would also not deny that a person might stop using pearls or wearing silk because they are both obtained by killing innocent worms. I can even concede that a person suffering from pain may choose to avoid using leeches; he may be prepared to suffer rather than kill the leech. Whether others accept it or not, I can also accept that a person might carry pity so far as to spare even the water worms and risk dying of thirst. I can accept all this, but I can never accept that these natural states could be called moral, or that these alone can wash out a person's inner impurities, the presence of which is an obstacle in the path of meeting God Almighty.

I can never believe that to be meek and harmless in this manner, in which even some animals and birds excel, could become the means of acquiring a high degree of humanity. In my view, this is opposed to the cardinal virtue of seeking God's pleasure and it amounts to fighting the law of nature and rejecting the bounties that nature has bestowed upon us. Spirituality can be attained only through the exercise of each moral quality at its proper time and place, treading faithfully in the way of God, and being wholly devoted to Him. He who truly becomes God's cannot exist without Him. A person who truly understands God is like a fish offered unto the hand of God. Its water is the love of God.

Three Methods of Reform

I have mentioned that there are three sources of human states, namely, *Nafs-e-Ammārah* [the self that incites to evil], *Nafs-e-Lawwāmah* [the self-reproaching self] and *Nafs-e-Muṭma'innah* [the soul at rest.] Similarly, there are three methods of reform.

The first method of reform is that savages should be trained in rudimentary morals so that they follow the etiquette pertaining to social matters like eating, drinking, marriage, etc. They should not go about naked, nor eat carrion, nor exhibit any other ill manners. This is the elementary stage of reform of the natural state. It is the type of reform that should be adopted, for example, when teaching proper manners to a wild savage of Port Blair whom one should start instructing in basic morals and manners.

The second method of reform is that, after a person has acquired basic human manners, he should be instructed in higher moral qualities and taught to exercise all human faculties on their proper occasion and place.

The third method of reform is that those who have formally learned to exercise morals should be taught to relish the taste of true Love and Communion. These are the three reforms mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 327-328]

Khalq [Creation] and *Khulq* [Morals]

People commonly take *Khulq* [morals] to mean meekness, courtesy and humility. They are wrong. The truth is that corresponding to every physical action there is an inner quality which is called *Khulq* [moral]. For instance, a person sheds tears through the eyes and, corresponding

to this action, there is an inner quality called tenderness which takes on the character of a moral quality when exercised on its proper occasion and under the control of God-given wisdom. In the same way, a person defends himself against the attack of an enemy with his hands, and corresponding to this physical action there is an inner quality called bravery. When a person shows bravery on its proper occasion, it becomes a moral quality. In the same way, sometimes a person tries to save the oppressed from the oppressors, wishes to make some provisions for the indigent and the hungry, or seeks to serve humanity in some other way, and corresponding to such an action there is an inner quality called mercy. Sometimes a person punishes a wrongdoer, and corresponding to this action there is an inner quality called retribution. Sometimes a person is attacked, but he does not want to retaliate in kind and condones the wrong of a wrongdoer, and corresponding to this action there is an inner quality called forgiveness and forbearance. Sometimes a person uses his hands or feet, or employs his head or heart or his wealth to promote the welfare of his fellow beings, and corresponding to this action there is an inner quality called generosity. When a person exercises all these qualities at their proper time and place, they are called moral qualities. Addressing our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Allah the Glorious, says:

إِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ⁵

That is, ‘Yours is indeed the most exalted moral station.’

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 10, pp. 332-333]

⁵ Al-Qalam, 68:5 [Publisher]

Natural States Become Moral by Proper Regulation

Natural states are not something apart from moral states. When employed temperately on their proper place and occasion, and regulated by reason, natural states acquire the character of moral states. When exercised without the control and advice of reason and understanding, they are not truly moral; however much they may resemble them, they are no more than the involuntary exercise of natural impulses. For instance, if a dog or a goat shows love or docility towards its master, the dog will not be considered moral nor will the goat be called civilized, nor, for that matter, will we describe a wolf or a tiger as immoral on account of its savage nature. As we have already said, a moral quality emerges only when reflection and regard for the appropriate time and occasion come into play. A person who does not exercise reason and prudence is like the suckling whose mind and intellect are not yet governed by reason, or like the insane who have lost their reason and intelligence.

Sometimes a suckling or an insane person does appear to act in a manner which looks ethical, but no sensible person would call them moral as such behaviour does not spring from discretion and propriety but is a natural response to stimuli. For example, a human baby seeks its mother's breast immediately after it is born; a chicken runs to pick up grain as soon as it is hatched; a newly hatched leech behaves like a leech; a baby snake acts like a snake; and a tiger cub conducts itself like a tiger. Particularly, one should carefully observe a human baby to see how, immediately after it is born, it begins to behave like humans, and these natural habits become more pronounced after a year or so. For instance, its crying be-

comes louder, its smile turns into laughter, and its vision becomes more volitional. At this stage, it reveals another natural trait by displaying its pleasure or displeasure through gestures and tries to strike someone or desires to give something to someone. But all these movements are natural impulses. Indeed a savage too is like a child whose share of human reason is very meagre. He too displays natural impulses in his words, actions and movements, and is subject to his natural drives. But nothing proceeds from him in consequence of reflection and deliberation. Whatever takes place inside him continues to issue forth in response to the external stimuli. It is quite possible that his natural impulses, which are exhibited as a reaction to the external stimuli, may not be all bad. Some may look like moral actions, but they are devoid of rational reflection and choice and, even if they seem to some degree so motivated, they cannot be relied upon on account of the domination of natural impulses.

True Morals

In short, we cannot truly attribute morals to a person who is subject to natural impulses like animals or infants or the insane, and who lives more or less like savages. In the true sense, the time of morals, whether good or bad, begins when a person's God-given reason ripens and he is able to distinguish between good and bad and the degree of good and evil. And he begins to feel sorry when he misses an opportunity of doing good and is remorseful when he has done something wrong. This is the second stage of man's life, which is designated as *Nafs-e-Lawwāmah* [the self-reproaching self] in God's Holy Word.

It should, however, be remembered that mere advice is

not enough to lead a savage to the stage of the self-reproaching self. It is necessary that he should become conscious of the existence of God to a degree at which he should not consider his own creation as meaningless and without purpose, so that an understanding of the Divine should create true morals in him. That is why God Almighty has drawn attention to the need of understanding the True God and has given the assurance that every action and moral quality has a consequence, which becomes the source of spiritual comfort or spiritual torment in this life and the consequences of which would be fully apparent in the hereafter. In short, at the stage of the self-reproaching self, a person partakes so much of reason and understanding and good conscience that he reproaches himself over evil and is willing and eager to do good. That is the stage at which a person acquires the high moral qualities.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 330-332]

Addressing the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), God, the Glorious, says:

إِنَّكَ لَعَلَّ خُلُقِي عَظِيمٌ⁶

That is, 'Yours is indeed the most exalted moral station.' This means that all high moral qualities, such as generosity, bravery, justice, mercy, benevolence, sincerity, courage, etc., were combined in the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

In short, all modes of behaviour found in the human person, like courtesy, modesty, integrity, politeness, righteous indignation, steadfastness, chastity, temperance, moderation, sympathy, bravery, generosity, forgiveness,

⁶ Al-Qalam, 68:5 [Publisher]

patience, benevolence, sincerity, loyalty, etc., when they find expression at their proper time and place, under the guidance of reason and reflection, are designated moral. All such qualities are in reality the natural states and emotions of the human person and they are designated as such only when exercised at their proper time and place.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, p. 333]

Moral State of Man

Moral qualities are of two kinds. First, those moral qualities that enable a person to discard evil and, secondly, those moral qualities that enable him to do good. Discarding evil includes those moral qualities through which a person tries that he should cause no harm to the person, property, honour or life of another person by his tongue, hand, eyes or any other organ, nor should he intend to cause any harm or humiliation. Doing good comprises all those morals through which a person tries to benefit the property or honour of another person through his tongue or hand or property or knowledge or through other means, or even intends to do so. Or he overlooks if anyone had done him any harm, for which the perpetrator deserved to be punished, and thus saves him from suffering physical torment, or financial loss; or tries to award him the punishment which in reality proves to be a blessing in disguise for the culprit.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 339-340]

Moral Qualities Related to Discarding Evil

It should be clear that the moral qualities that the True Creator has prescribed for discarding evil are known by four names in Arabic, which has a specific name for all human ideas, actions and morals.

The first moral quality for discarding evil is known as *Iḥ-ṣān*. This term connotes the particular kind of chastity which relates to the procreative power of man and woman. *Muḥṣin* and *Muḥṣinah* respectively connote the man or woman who abstains from illicit sex or its preliminaries, the consequence of which for both is disgrace and curse in this world and torment in the hereafter; and for their relatives it is quite damaging, as well as a source of disgrace....

Remember, the moral quality of *Iḥṣān* or chastity or sexual purity, can be called moral only when a person, who is capable of ogling or fornicating restrains himself from it. If a person lacks manhood, on account of immaturity, impotence, being a eunuch or because of old age, we cannot credit him with this particular moral quality known as chastity....

God Almighty has not only commanded chastity, but has also prescribed five remedies to safeguard it, namely, abstaining from looking at those whom we are not allowed to, or hearing their voices, or listening to stories about them and avoiding participating in all those occasions which are likely to lead to evil, and fasting, if one is unmarried.

We can confidently claim that this excellent teaching with all its details, as set out in the Holy Qur'ān, is peculiar to Islām alone....

Of the various forms of discarding evil, the second is the virtue known as *Amānat* and *Diyānat* [honesty and integrity], which is the indisposition to harm anyone by taking possession of his property mischievously and dishonestly. It should be clear that honesty and integrity constitute a natural human condition. That is why a child,

which is by nature simple and naïve, and, because of its young age, has not yet acquired any bad habits, dislikes what belongs to others; so much so that it is with great difficulty that it allows a strange woman to breastfeed it. If a wet-nurse is not appointed early enough, it becomes very difficult for another woman to suckle the baby, and in such a case the child suffers so much that its very life is endangered. It is naturally averse to the milk of another woman. What is the secret of this aversion? Only that it has an innate aversion to leave its mother and turn to what belongs to a stranger.

When we reflect deeply upon this habit of the infant it becomes clear that this characteristic of disliking what belongs to a stranger, and even suffering because of it, is the source of honesty and integrity. No one can be credited with the quality of integrity unless, like the infant, he develops in his heart a deep dislike and abhorrence for the possession of another person's property. But an infant does not employ this habit on its proper occasion and often suffers a great deal on account of its ignorance. This habit is a natural mode of behaviour, which it exhibits involuntarily; it cannot, therefore, form part of its morals, though in human nature this is the root cause of the moral values of honesty and integrity. Just as an infant cannot be described as faithful and trustworthy on account of this unconscious habit, similarly a person who does not employ this natural state on its proper occasion, cannot be said to possess this moral quality.

To be honest and trustworthy is a very delicate matter and a person cannot be honest and trustworthy unless he fulfils all aspects of it. In the following verses God, by way of illustration, teaches us how to be honest:

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا وَادْرَؤُهُمْ فِيهَا وَ
 اكْسُوهُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۝ وَابْتَلُوا الَّذِينَ يَتَّبِعُونَكُم بِأَمْوَالِكُمُ الَّتِي جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ قِيَمًا
 وَلَا تَكُونُوا تَارِكِينَ مَوَالِكُم بَعْدَ وَفَاءِكُمْ بِلَا إِلَافٍ وَلَا تَكُونُوا
 مَكْرُوفِينَ ۝ وَإِذَا دُعِيتُمْ إِلَى مَالِكُمْ فَاكْسُوا سَرَفًا ۝ وَإِذَا دُعِيتُمْ إِلَى
 مَالِكِ الْيَتَامَىٰ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُمْ لَكُمْ يُؤْفِكُونَ إِلَّا طَبَاقًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 الَّذِي هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُكُونُوا حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ ۚ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ فَاكْسُواهُمْ مِّنْ مَّالِكُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۚ
 ذَٰلِكُمْ أَفْضَلُ لَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ ۝ وَإِذَا دُعِيتُمْ إِلَىٰ مَالِكِ الزَّوْجِ
 فَكُونُوا لِلزَّوْجِ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَكُمْ يُؤْفِكُونَ إِلَّا طَبَاقًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ
 الَّذِي هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُكُونُوا حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ ۚ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ فَاكْسُواهُمْ مِّنْ مَّالِكُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۚ
 ذَٰلِكُمْ أَفْضَلُ لَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ ۝ وَإِذَا دُعِيتُمْ إِلَىٰ مَالِكِ الزَّوْجِ فَكُونُوا لِلزَّوْجِ فَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَكُمْ
 يُؤْفِكُونَ إِلَّا طَبَاقًا مِّنْهُنَّ ۚ فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَا تُكُونُوا حَيْثُ كُنْتُمْ ۚ وَالْيَتَامَىٰ فَاكْسُواهُمْ
 مِّنْ مَّالِكُمْ وَقُولُوا لَهُمْ قَوْلًا مَعْرُوفًا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ أَفْضَلُ لَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ قَادِرِينَ عَلَىٰ ۝

Translation: ‘If there is a rich person among you who is not mentally fit, e.g., an orphan, or a minor, and there is a risk that he will waste his property due to imbecility, take charge of the property (as court of wards) and do not hand over the property which can be used for trade and commerce to the feeble-minded. But feed them and clothe them properly as required and speak to them appropriately, that is, teach them things that add to their understanding and skills until they are no longer ignorant and inexperienced. If they are the progeny of a trader, teach them trade, and if their parents belonged to another profession, train them accordingly. In short, train them and keep testing them to make sure that your training is not in vain, until they reach the marriageable age, i.e., the age of 18. Then if you find them capable of managing their own property, hand it over to them. Do not squander away their property. Nor, for that matter, should you hasten to consume their belongings fearing that they will come asking for it when they grow up. A person who is rich should not take any compensation for

⁷ Al-Nisā’, 4:6-7 [Publisher]

⁸ Al-Nisā’, 4:10-11 [Publisher]

managing the property, but one who is needy can do so only to the extent allowed by custom.' It was customary among the Arabs that they only accepted a part of the profits of the property of orphans and left the principal intact. The same is indicated here.

Then it is said: 'When you deliver their property to them, do so in the presence of witnesses. And if a person dies, leaving behind weak and minor children, he should not make a will that does injustice to the children. Those who devour the property of orphans in a manner unjust to the orphans do not devour property, rather they swallow fire and they shall be cast into a blazing fire'.

In these verses, Allah the Most High has listed comprehensively all the ways of being dishonest, and no type of dishonesty has been left out. God did not merely forbid stealing, lest an ignorant one should think that theft alone was unlawful for him and that all other improprieties were permitted. Declaring all dishonest acts unlawful is true wisdom.

In short, if a person does not possess the qualities of integrity and honesty with full awareness of their implications, even if he does appear to exercise integrity and honesty in certain matters, this behaviour of his will not be considered moral. Instead it will be a natural state lacking rational awareness and insight.

The third moral quality in the context of renouncing evil is called *Hudnah* and *Haun* in Arabic, which means not to inflict physical suffering on anyone wrongfully, to be harmless, and to live peacefully. Peacefulness is undoubtedly a high moral quality and is a must for mankind. The natural faculty corresponding to this moral quality possessed by a child, the regulation of which

produces this moral quality, is affection, or malleability. In his natural state, when man is deprived of reason, he can neither understand the subject of peace nor the concept of making war. At that time the impulse of attachment found in him is the root of peacefulness. But, as it is not exercised because of reason, reflection and choice, it cannot be called moral. It would become moral only when a person chooses to be harmless and employs the moral quality of peacefulness on its proper occasion and refrains from employing it out of place. In this context the Divine teaching is:

وَأَصْلِحُوا ذَاتَ بَيْنِكُمْ⁽ⁱ⁾ وَالصُّلْحُ خَيْرٌ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ وَإِنْ جَنَحُوا لِلسَّلْمِ فَاجْنَحْ لَهَا⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾
وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ يَمْشُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا^(iv) وَإِذَا مَرُّوا بِالْغَوَمِ
كَرَاهًا^(v) إِذْ نَعَمَ بِاللَّيْلِ هِيَ أَخْسَنُ قَرَادًا^(vi) الَّذِي بَيْنَكَ وَبَيْنَهُ عَدَاوَةٌ كَأَنَّهُ
وَلِيُّ حَمِيمٍ^(vii)

That is: ‘Try to promote accord among yourselves.’

‘Goodness lies in reconciliation.’

‘If they incline towards peace, incline thou also towards it.’

‘The true servants of the Gracious Lord are those who walk upon earth in peace.’

‘When they happen to hear anything impertinent which portends argument or spells trouble, they pass on with quiet dignity and do not pick up fights on minor matters.’

This means that, unless faced with extreme repression, they do not like to protest. These indeed are the

⁽ⁱ⁾ Al-Anfāl, 8:2 ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Al-Nisā’, 4:129 ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ Al-Anfāl, 8:62 ^(iv) Al-Furqān, 25:64 ^(v) Al-Furqān, 25:73 ^(vi) Hā Mīm Al-Sajdah, 41:35 [Publisher]

proprieties of peacefulness that one should ignore trivialities and be ready to forgive. The term '*laghv*', according to Arabic lexicon, means the certain kind of behaviour, for instance, when a mischief monger indulges in loose talk or does something to cause harm, but in fact is unable to cause harm or create trouble; hence it is the sign of peacefulness to condone such senseless misdemeanour.

The fourth form of renouncing evil consists in *Rifq* and *Qaul-i-Hasan* [gentleness and politeness] and the natural state that gives birth to this quality is called *Talāqat*, or cheerfulness. Until a child learns to speak, it displays cheerfulness in place of courtesy and politeness. This shows that the root of courtesy is cheerfulness. Cheerfulness is a natural faculty and courtesy is a moral quality that is generated by the proper use of this faculty. In this context the teaching of God Almighty is:

وَقُولُوا لِلنَّاسِ حُسْنًا ⁽ⁱ⁾ لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِنْ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِنْهُمْ وَلَا
نِسَاءٌ مِنْ نِسَاءٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنْفُسَكُمْ وَلَا تَنَابَزُوا
بِأَلْسِنَابٍ ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ رَاغِبِينَ إِلَىٰ الْكِبَرِ مِنَ الظَّنِّ إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظَّنِّ إِشْمٌ وَلَا تَجَسَّسُوا
وَلَا يَغْتَابَ بَعْضُكُمُ بَعْضًا وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ وَلَا تَقْفُ
مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْعُورًا ^(iv)

Translation: 'Say to people that which is really good.'

'Let not one people laugh at another people; it may well be that those who are laughed at are really praiseworthy. Let one group of women not deride other women; it is possible that those who are mocked at are really good. Do not cast aspersions and do not address your fellow

¹⁰ (i) Al-Baqarah, 2:84 (ii) Al-Hujurāt, 49:12 (iii) Al-Hujurāt, 49:13

(iv) Banī Isrā'īl, 17:37 [Publisher]

men with offensive names.’

‘Do not spread doubts and suspicions, nor should you be curious about other people’s faults. Do not complain or grumble.

‘Do not accuse anyone without proof. Remember, every organ of the body will be called to account. The ear, the eye and the heart shall all be answerable.’

Moral Qualities Related to Doing Good

Of the moral qualities that are related to doing good, the first one is *‘Afw*, or forgiving people’s sins. Forgiving someone who causes harm and deserves to be punished, imprisoned, fined, or handled directly, provided such forgiveness is appropriate, would amount to doing him good. In this context, the teaching of the Holy Qur’ān is:

وَالْكَاظِمِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ¹¹
جَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٍ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ¹²

This means that: ‘The righteous are those who control their anger when the occasion so demands and pardon sin when the situation requires.’

‘The recompense of an injury is a penalty in proportion thereto, but whoso forgives—and effects thereby a reform in the offender and no harm is apprehended, that is to say, he exercises forgiveness on its proper occasion—will have his reward with Allah.’

The above verse shows that the Qur’ān does not teach non-resistance to evil on all occasions, or that mischief

¹¹ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:135 [Publisher]

¹² Al-Shūrā, 42:41 [Publisher]

makers and wrongdoers should never be punished. What it teaches is that one must consider whether the occasion demands forgiveness or punishment and to adopt the course which would be in the best interest of both the offender and the community at large. At times, an offender might repent if he is forgiven, but at times he may become even more daring. Therefore, God Almighty says: Do not cultivate the habit of forgiving blindly; consider carefully wherein lies the real good—in forgiveness or in punishment—and do what is appropriate considering the time and the circumstances.

A study of the human race reveals that some people are by nature highly vindictive: they preserve in their minds all the wrongs done to their fathers, and there are others who carry forbearance and forgiveness even to the extent of shamelessness and are guilty of condoning and forgiving such shameless acts as are contrary to self-respect, honour, dignity and chastity, and tarnish the image of good morals. As a result, the entire society is outraged. That is why the Holy Qur'ān has enjoined the condition of proper time and occasion for the exercise of every moral quality and does not approve of such moral quality as is not in keeping with the prerequisites of the occasion....

We have repeatedly stressed that the difference between a moral quality and natural state is that a moral quality is always in keeping with the requirements of the place and time and a natural state finds expression regardless of such conditions.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 340-352]

All scholars are agreed that the highest moral station is not merely dependent on exercising forgiveness and for-

bearance on every occasion. Had man been told merely to exercise forgiveness and forbearance, hundreds of moral acts that depend upon indignation and retribution would have become impossible. Human nature, which makes man what he is, is that God has invested man as much with the faculty of forgiveness and forbearance as with the sentiment of indignation and revenge. God has placed reason over all these faculties as the arbiter. Therefore, man realizes his true humanity when both these types of faculties are exercised under the control of reason. That is to say, these faculties should be like the subjects and reason should, like a just ruler, be occupied with fostering them, enhancing their beneficence, settling their conflicts and resolving their difficulties.

For instance, on occasion one gets angry whereas it is gentleness that is really called for. On such occasions, reason intervenes to restrain the anger and activates gentleness. And at times the occasion demands anger but gentleness takes hold instead. On such an occasion, reason rouses anger and quells gentleness. In short, in-depth research shows that man has been sent into this world well equipped with a variety of faculties; perfection of his nature lies in exercising every faculty on its proper occasion; there should be anger when anger is called for and mercy when mercy is needed and not that there should be only gentleness and all other faculties should remain suspended and inactive. The display of gentleness on its proper occasion is an excellence, but the tree of man's nature which has many branches would not be considered perfect by the flourishing of only one branch. It would only be considered complete when all its branches flourish and no branch exceeds or falls short of its appropriate norm.

Reason undeniably shows that to condone the wickedness of a wicked person always and on all occasions cannot possibly be considered moral. The law of nature too exposes the defect of such a notion. We observe that the True Planner has so ordained that in the order of the universe sometimes tenderness is required and severity is required at others; sometimes forgiveness is required and sometimes punishment is required. Tenderness alone or severity alone would upset the system of the universe. Therefore, it proves that to forgive always and on all occasions is not a true virtue and that to consider such teaching as perfect is an error which is being committed by those whose insight into human nature is not deep enough and whose eyes remain closed to all the faculties that have been bestowed upon man for use on appropriate occasions. A person who continues to exercise the same faculty on all occasions, allowing all other faculties to fall into disuse, seeks, as it were, to change his God-given nature and, on account of his short-sightedness, declares the act of the All-Wise God to be objectionable. Would it be commendable if we were to keep overlooking the offences of the offenders all the time, regardless of the requirement of the situation and propriety, and were never to have such sympathy with the offender that, by remedying his mischief, we should reform him?

Clearly, just as it is objectionable and unethical to punish or take revenge over trifles, it is likewise contrary to goodwill to make it a point always to forgive whenever a person commits an offence. Whoever allows an offender to go unpunished is as much an enemy of law and order as he who is always ready to malign and take revenge. The ignorant would like to condone and forgive at every occasion. They just do not realize that forgiveness on

every occasion disrupts the order of the world. Also, it is against the best interests of the culprit, for he becomes more and more hardened in his evil ways and the tendency to do mischief gets even more entrenched. Let a thief go unpunished and see what he does the next time! That is why God Almighty said in His Book, which is full of wisdom:

وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقِصَاصِ حَيَوةٌ يَا أُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ¹³

مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا¹⁴

This means that: ‘O men of understanding! Your life lies in killing the killer; and award punishment proportionate to the crime.’

‘Whosoever kills a person unjustly and without cause is virtually guilty of killing the whole of mankind.’

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ¹⁵

That is: ‘God enjoins that you must exercise justice, benevolence, and *Ītā’i dhil Qurbā* [graciousness towards all as between kindred] on their proper occasions.’

Let it be known that the teaching of the Gospels is inferior to and falls short of the perfection that sustains and regulates the order of the universe; rather, it is a grave error to regard this teaching as perfect and complete. Such a teaching can never be perfect. It belongs to the period in which the Children of Israel had been left with the minimal sentiment of compassion, whereas ruthlessness, cruelty, brutality, hard-heartedness and maliciousness

¹³ Al-Baqarah, 2:180 [Publisher]

¹⁴ Al-Mā'idah, 5:33 [Publisher]

¹⁵ Al-Nahl, 16:91 [Publisher]

had exceeded all limits. Since they were excessively given to vengefulness, God so willed that they should be made to incline towards compassion and forgiveness. But this teaching of mercy and forbearance was not a teaching that could stand forever, as it was not based on an absolute value. Instead, it was like a local law, which was expediently designed, with a view to reforming the headstrong Jews, and it was meant for a limited duration.

Jesus was only too well aware that God would soon abolish this provisional teaching and would send the Perfect Book for the guidance of mankind, which would invite the whole world to real virtue and open the door of truth and wisdom to the servants of God. This is why he had to say that there were so many things which still remained to be taught which they were unable to bear at the time, and that someone else would come after him who would explain everything and raise religion to perfection. Consequently, Jesus was seated in heaven leaving the Gospels incomplete, and it was the same incomplete book that remained with the people for such a long time. Then, in keeping with the prophecy of the same innocent prophet, God sent down the Holy Qur'ān and revealed a comprehensive law, which neither—like the Torah—laid down that the principle of 'Tooth for a tooth' be practiced in all circumstances, nor did it ordain—like the Gospels—that one must be always ready to be hit by an aggressor. Instead, the Perfect Book has abolished all the provisional injunctions. It invites us to true virtue, and enjoins that which results in genuine benefit, be it hard or soft.

The Holy Qur'ān says:

وَجَزَاءُ سَيِّئَةٍ سَيِّئَةٌ مِّثْلُهَا فَمَنْ عَفَا وَأَصْلَحَ فَأَجْرُهُ عَلَى اللَّهِ¹⁶

(Part Number 25)

This means that: In principle, the evildoer deserves retribution proportionate to his crime, but he who forgives in order to reform, provided forgiveness does not result in further mischief, will have his reward with Allah.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 409-434, subnote. 3]

The second moral quality for doing good is *'Adl* [equity], the third is *Ihsān* [benevolence] and the fourth is *Itā' i dhil Qurbā* [graciousness towards all as between kindred.] In this context Allah the Glorious says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِأَمْرٍ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ
وَيَنْهَىٰ عَنِ الْفَحْشَاءِ وَالْمُنْكَرِ وَالْبَغْيِ¹⁷

This means that: 'Almighty Allah enjoins you to return good for good, and should the occasion call for benevolence, to be benevolent, and if the occasion calls for spontaneous graciousness for all, quite like the next of kin, then to be gracious with natural compassion. However, God forbids that you should exceed the proper limits in one direction or the other and should be benevolent contrary to reason and should fail to be benevolent when the occasion demands or that you should fail to be gracious when the occasion demands or should be over gracious beyond that is needed. This noble verse discusses all the three stages of doing good.

The first stage is that we should do good in return for

¹⁶ Al-Shūrā, 42:41 [Publisher]

¹⁷ Al-Naḥl, 16:91 [Publisher]

good. This is the lowest level and even an average person can attain it by doing good to those who do him good.

The second level is relatively more difficult to attain. It consists of taking the initiative in doing good to someone *ex gratia*, when he is not entitled to it. This moral quality is of an intermediate grade. Most people are benevolent towards the poor, but there is a hidden deficiency in such benevolence. The person who acts benevolently is conscious of it and at least desires either gratitude or prayer in return. If on any occasion the beneficiary should turn against him, the benefactor dubs him ungrateful. Sometimes, he puts too heavy a price on the beneficiary on account of his benevolence or reminds him of his kindness. God Almighty warns the benevolent as follows:

لَا تُبْطِلُوا صَدَقَاتِكُمْ بِالْمَنِّ وَالْأَذَى¹⁸

That is: ‘O benevolent ones! Render not vain your charitable acts, which should be based on sincerity, by reminding the recipients of your generosity and hurting their feelings.’

The term *Ṣadaqah* [charity] is derived from *Ṣidq* [sincerity], and thus if the heart is devoid of sincerity and integrity, charity ceases to be charity and becomes ostentation....

The third level of doing good, according to God Almighty, implies that at this stage, the good action is done spontaneously and without consciousness of doing good or expecting gratitude in return. Instead, the good action is done under the upsurge of spontaneous emotion, quite like to the next of kin, for instance, a mother does good

¹⁸ Al-Baqarah, 2:265 [Publisher]

to her son out of pure sympathy. This is the highest grade of doing good, which cannot be surpassed.

God Almighty has made all these categories of doing good contingent upon the demands of time and occasion and has clearly laid down in the above verse, that if these good acts are not done on their proper occasion, they will become vices. '*Adl* [fairness] will become *Faḥshā*' [foul], or in other words, crossing limits will result in an undesirable situation. And *Iḥsān* [right] would become *Munkar* [wrong] which reason and conscience reject. And *Ītā'i dhil Qurbā* [spontaneous compassion] will turn into transgression, that is, this ill-placed sympathy would create an ugly situation. Actually, *Baghī* means such excessive rain as destroys the harvest; hence exceeding the appropriate limits is also *Baghī*.

In short, any of these three qualities, exercised out of place, would deteriorate in character; that is why these are made contingent upon the due observance of occasion and place. Here it should be remembered that justice, benevolence or graciousness as between kindred are not by themselves moral qualities. These are man's natural states and faculties, which are found even in children before their reason is developed. To become moral, the exercise of reason is the condition precedent. Another requirement is that every natural faculty should be exercised in its proper occasion and place.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 353-354]

True Courage

Of all the natural states of man is one that resembles courage. For example, a suckling sometimes tries to put its hand into the fire because of this natural faculty. Before being exposed to various frightening experiences, a

human being does not fear anything due to his natural fearlessness. In this condition, he fearlessly fights tigers and wild beasts, and sets out alone to challenge a multitude of men, and people consider him to be very brave. But this is only a natural state, which is also found in wild beasts and even in dogs. True courage, which is one of the high morals, is contingent on place and occasion. These places and occasions are mentioned in the Holy Word of God Almighty as follows:

وَالصَّابِرِينَ فِي الْبَأْسَاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَحِينَ الْبَأْسِ ¹⁹
 وَالَّذِينَ صَبَرُوا ابْتِغَاءَ وَجْهِ رَبِّهِمْ ²⁰
 الَّذِينَ قَالَ لَهُمُ النَّاسُ إِنَّ النَّاسَ قَدْ جَمَعُوا لَكُمْ فَاخْشَوْهُمْ
 فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا وَقَالُوا حَسْبُنَا اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيلُ ²¹
 وَلَا تَكُونُوا كَالَّذِينَ خَرَجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بَطَرًا وَرِئَاءَ النَّاسِ ²²

These verses mean that: ‘The brave are those who do not run away from battle or adversity’;

‘Their steadfastness in battle and hardship is to win the pleasure of God. They do not intend to display their bravery but to please Him’;

‘They are threatened that people have mustered against them and that they should be afraid of them. Threats only reinforce their faith and they declare: God is Sufficient for us. That is, their courage is not like that of dogs and wild beasts, which is based only on natural passions and is one-sided. Their courage has two dimensions. Some-

¹⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:178 [Publisher]

²⁰ Al-Ra‘d, 13:23 [Publisher]

²¹ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:174 [Publisher]

²² Al-Anfāl, 8:48 [Publisher]

times they fight their selfish desires and conquer them with their personal courage; and at times, when they see that the appropriate thing would be to confront and fight the enemy, they do so not only due to their natural passion, but also to help the truth. They display bravery by putting their trust in God rather than their own selves.’

‘Their courage is free from ostentation and vanity, nor is it for self-aggrandizement, rather God’s pleasure is their supreme object.’

These verses illustrate that the source of true courage is patience and steadfastness. Courage means to remain steadfast and not to run away like cowards when assailed by a selfish motive or some other affliction. Therefore, there is a great difference between the courage of a man and that of a predator. A predator’s fierceness and fury is only one-sided when it is roused, but a person who possesses true courage, chooses between confrontation or non-resistance, whichever may be more appropriate.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 10, pp. 358-360]

Patience

Ṣabr [Patience] is one of the natural human states. One has to exercise it in the face of calamities, ailments and hardships which constantly befall him. Man comes to practise patience in the end, albeit after a great deal of moaning and crying. But it should be clearly understood, that, according to the Holy Book of God, such steadfastness is not part of morals, instead it is a state that follows exhaustion as a matter of course. After all, it is quite natural for man to cry and bewail in the face of a calamity, but, in the end, after venting his feelings, he recovers and after the climax he begins to relax. Both these states are natural and have nothing to do with morals. On the

contrary, the moral part of it would be that after losing something, considering it to be a trust from God Almighty, one should not complain about it. Rather, one should affirm that God has taken back what belonged to Him in the first place, and should accept the will of God. Regarding this particular moral quality, God Almighty's Holy Word, the Glorious Qur'ān, says:

وَلَقَدْ كَلَّمْنَاكُمْ بِشَيْءٍ مِّنَ الْخَوْفِ وَالْجُوعِ وَنَقْصٍ مِّنَ الْأَمْوَالِ وَالْأَنْفُسِ
وَالْأَمْوَالِ، وَبَشِّرَ الصَّابِرِينَ ۝ الَّذِينَ إِذَا أَصَابَتْهُمُ مُصِيبَةٌ قَالُوا
إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاغِبُونَ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّن رَّبِّهِمْ وَ
رَحْمَةٌ ۖ وَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْتَخُونَ ۝²³

This means that: ‘O believers! We shall keep trying you. Thus, at times you will be overtaken by fear; sometimes you will be visited by adversity and starvation or you will suffer financially; sometimes your lives will be endangered, sometimes your toil will be fruitless and your efforts will not yield the desired results; and sometimes your dear children will die. Therefore, convey glad tidings to those, who, when they are visited by a calamity, affirm: We belong to God and we are His trust and vassals. The truth is that trust should return to its owner. These are the people who are the recipients of Divine grace and these are the people who have found their way to God.’

In short, the name of this moral quality is steadfastness or, in other words, willing submission to the Divine will. From another perspective, this quality may also be called ‘*Adl* [equity or justice.] Throughout a believer's life, God Almighty does so many things to his liking and manifests

²³ Al-Baqarah, 2:156-158 [Publisher]

thousands of matters in accord with his wishes, and He has blessed him with so many bounties in keeping with his needs, that he cannot even count them. Therefore, if God ever desires that man should comply with His will, it would be unfair and improper not to submit to His will, to find excuses, or to lose faith and go astray.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 361-362]

Ṣalāt [Prayer] and *Istighfār* [seeking forgiveness] are excellent remedies for apathy and indifference. One should supplicate in *Ṣalāt*: O Allah, alienate me from my sins. If a person continues to pray sincerely, it is certain that his prayer would be answered sometime. It is not good to be in a hurry. A farmer does not harvest the crop immediately after sowing. One who is impatient is unfortunate. The sign of a pious one is that he is not impatient. Lack of patience has resulted in many a known case of failure. If a person digs a well to the depth of twenty arms length, and stops short of just one due to his impatience, he would waste his entire labour. Were he to dig the remaining arm length with patience, he would achieve his purpose.

It is the way of God Almighty that He bestows the blessings of love, eagerness and understanding after sufferings. A bounty that is easily acquired is not appreciated. It is well said by Sa'dī:

گر نه باشد بدوست راه بردن
شرط عشق است در طلب مُردن²⁴

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 245]

²⁴ *Even if it is not possible to reach the Friend;*

Love demands that one should die seeking. [Publisher]

Truthfulness

Of all the natural states of man, one that is an essential part of his nature is truthfulness. Normally, unless a person is moved by some selfish motive, he does not wish to tell a lie. He is naturally averse to falsehood and is reluctant to have recourse to it. That is why, he dislikes a person whom he knows to be a liar and looks down upon him with contempt. But this natural state by itself cannot be considered moral. Even children and the insane exhibit this quality. The fact is that so long as a person does not renounce such selfish motives as prevent him from telling the truth, he cannot be considered truthful. If a person tells the truth only when he stands to lose nothing but tells a lie when his honour, property or life are threatened, how then can he be considered better than children and the insane. Do minors and the insane not speak this kind of truth? There is hardly anyone in the world who would tell a lie without any motive. Truth that is abandoned at a time of risk can never form part of the true morals. The real occasion of telling the truth is when one apprehends loss of life or property or honour. In this context, the Divine teaching is:

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ²⁵

وَلَا يَأْبَ الشُّهَدَاءُ إِذَا مَا دُعُوا²⁶

وَلَا تَكُونُوا الشَّاهِدَةَ وَمَنْ يَحْتُمِهَا فَإِنَّهُ إِشْمُ قَلْبِهِ²⁷

وَلَا تَأْكُلُوا أَمْوَالَكُمْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَلَا تَكُونُوا دَا قُرْبَى²⁸

²⁵ Al-Hajj, 22:31 [Publisher]

²⁶ Al-Baqarah, 2:283 [Publisher]

²⁷ Al-Baqarah, 2:284 [Publisher]

²⁸ Al-An‘ām, 6:153 [Publisher]

كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ بِالْقِسْطِ شُهَدَاءَ لِلَّهِ وَلَوْ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِكُمْ أَوَالِيَ الَّذِينَ وَالَىٰ الْكَافِرِينَ ²⁹
 وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَاٰنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَتُخَذُوا ³⁰
 وَالصَّٰدِقِينَ وَالصَّٰدِقَاتِ ³¹
 وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْحَقِّ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ ³²
 لَا يَشْهَدُونَ الزُّورَ ³³

Translation: ‘Keep away from idol worship and lying’, because falsehood too is an idol; one who relies upon it ceases to rely upon God. Hence, by telling lies, one loses God.

‘When you are summoned to testify to the truth, do not refuse to do so.’

‘Do not conceal true testimony; and he who conceals it, his heart is certainly sinful.’

‘And when you speak, speak only what is absolutely true and fair, even when you testify against a close relative.’

‘Hold fast to the truth and justice, and bear witness only for the sake of Allah. Never utter a lie even if telling the truth may endanger your lives or your parent’s lives or other loved ones like your children.’

‘Let not hostility towards a people prevent you from giving true testimony.’

‘Truthful men and truthful women will earn great reward.’

²⁹ Al-Nisā’, 4:136 [Publisher]

³⁰ Al-Mā’idah, 5:9 [Publisher]

³¹ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:36 [Publisher]

³² Al-‘Aṣr, 103:4 [Publisher]

³³ Al-Furqān, 25:73 [Publisher]

‘They are accustomed to counselling truth.’

‘They do not keep company with the untruthful.’

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 10, pp. 360-361]

Change in Moral Qualities

There are two schools of thought regarding the possibility of moral reform. There are those who believe that man is capable of moral reform, and others who believe that he is not. The truth of the matter is that morals can be changed if one is not complacent, and makes an effort to do so.

This reminds me of a story. It is said that once a man came to see the famous Greek philosopher Plato and sought permission to enter. It was Plato’s habit that he only allowed visitors to enter after studying their facial features and physiognomy. This helped him to judge the personality of the visitor. This time too his servant described to him the features of the visitor. Plato said: “Tell him that since he is a man of low morals, I will not see him.” The visitor heard Plato’s remark and said that what he had said was true, but he had given up his evil ways and was a reformed man. Plato agreed that such a change was possible. The visitor was then shown in and was received with much respect and honour.

Philosophers who believe that moral reform is not possible are mistaken. We know of some civil servants who were given to taking bribes, repented of it and thereafter would not accept a bribe even of the highest amount.

Repentance, in reality, is very vital and helpful to bring about moral reform and makes a man perfect. In other words, if a person seeks to shed his bad habits for good ones, he must first repent with sincerity and full resolve.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 137-138]

The Reality of Love

The fourth objection is that Islamic teaching never enjoins love for the followers of other religions; it only enjoins love for Muslims.

In reply, let it be clear that all this is the unfortunate outcome of the New Testament which is neither complete nor perfect, and because of which Christians digressed from the truth and reality. If one reflects deeply on what love is, when it should be exercised, and what hatred is and when it should be exercised, then not only does one comprehend true philosophy of the Holy Qur'ān, but the soul also achieves the perfect light of true understanding.

Remember, love is not pretence or affectation. It is one of the human faculties. The essence of love is to have sincerity for something and to be drawn irresistibly towards it. Just as the real characteristics of an object are only truly perceived when it reaches perfection, the same is the case with love, in that its qualities are openly revealed when it is extreme and reaches perfection. Referring to this, Allah the Almighty says:

أَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْوَجَلَ³⁴

That is: 'They loved the calf as if their hearts were permeated with it.'

In point of fact, when a person falls in love with someone and his love is total, it becomes his food and his drink, as it were. Indeed he takes on the complexion of the character and lifestyle of the beloved. The greater the love, the more a person is involuntarily drawn towards the qualities of the loved one, so much so, that he becomes his

³⁴ Al-Baqarah, 2:94 [Publisher]

very reflection. That is why, consistent with his capacity, a person who loves God acquires, metaphorically speaking, God's light. Similarly, those who love Satan acquire the darkness which belongs to Satan. This being the reality of love, how can a true Scripture, which is from God, ever permit that you should love Satan as you love God, or love the successors of Satan the way you ought to love the successors of the Gracious One.

The pity of it is that we had hitherto held the New Testament to be false only because it deifies a humble mortal. But now we can also prove that various other teachings of the Gospels are also impure. How can a teaching be pure which requires one to love Satan as he ought to love God? It would be an exercise in futility to contend that these sayings were a slip of the tongue on the part of Jesus because he was ignorant of the philosophy of the Divine. If this was so, why did he claim to be the reformer of his people? Was he a child? Did he not even know that true love demands that the lover should sincerely love the habits, morals and religious practices of the beloved, and should endeavour heart and soul to be lost in them, so that he may attain through the beloved the life that belongs to him. The true lover loses himself in the beloved. He becomes the manifestation of the beloved and reflects in himself the image of the beloved to the extent that it becomes part and parcel of his person. After acquiring his complexion and by standing with him, he demonstrates to the people that for a fact he is totally lost in love for his beloved.

Muḥabbat [love] is an Arabic word which literally means 'to be filled'. The well-known Arabic idiom *تَحَبَّبَ الْجَمَارُ* is used when an Arab wants to say that a donkey's belly is full of water. When he wants to say that the

camel drank water to its full capacity, he says: شَرَبَتِ الْإِبِلُ حَتَّى تَحَبَّبَتْ *Hub*, meaning grain, is also derived from the same root, meaning that it is full of the qualities of the grain. Similarly, *Iḥbāb* also means to sleep, for he who is filled with something else loses himself as if he had gone to sleep and he had been deprived of all consciousness of his own self. If this is the reality of love, the Gospel, which teaches to love Satan and his followers, in other words it teaches that you too should partake of their wickedness. What a teaching! How can such a teaching be attributed to God Almighty. On the contrary, it seeks to convert man into Satan. May God save all from this teaching of the Gospel.

If it is asked that since it is forbidden to love Satan and his ilk, what kind of treatment should be meted out to them? The answer is that the Holy Word of God Almighty enjoins that they should be treated with great kindness and compassion, just as a kind-hearted person is kind to the lepers, the blind, the crippled and the lame, etc. However, the difference between compassion and love is that a lover admires all the words and deeds of his beloved and desires that he too should become like his beloved; but a compassionate person looks at the recipient of his compassion with concern and is afraid lest the sufferer should perish in his pitiable state. The sign of a truly compassionate person is that he is not always gentle to his object of pity. Rather, he deals with him in accordance with the demands of time and occasion. At times he is gentle and at times he is harsh. Sometimes he offers him drink and sometimes, like a wise doctor, considers the amputation of his hand or foot to save his life. Sometimes he operates upon his limb, and sometimes he applies balm. If you happen to visit a big hospital, which is

frequented by hundreds of patients of all kinds, and observe the daily tasks of an experienced doctor, you will then hopefully come to understand the meaning of compassion.

The Holy Qur'ān teaches us to love the virtuous, the pious and righteous, and also to have compassion for the wicked and the disbelievers. Almighty Allah says:

عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ³⁵

That is: 'O disbelievers, this Prophet is so compassionate that he cannot stand the sight of your suffering and is highly solicitous for your safety from these hardships.'

لَعَلَّكَ بَآخِئَةً نَفْسًا لَا يَكُونُ غَلَاؤُا مَوْمِنِينَ³⁶

That is: 'Will you die worrying why they do not believe?' This means that, your compassion has reached the limit where your anguish for them has brought you close to death.

تَوَاصَوْا بِالصَّبْرِ وَتَوَاصَوْا بِالْمَرْحَمَةِ³⁷

That is: 'The faithful are those who counsel patience and compassion to one another,' i.e., they advise patience in adversity and compassion towards God's creatures. Here too *Marḥamah* means compassion, for this is what the word *Marḥamah* implies in Arabic.

In short, the true meaning of the Qur'ānic teaching is that love, which in reality means to reflect in one's person the qualities of the beloved, is not permissible except for God Almighty and for the righteous ones. Indeed it is

³⁵ Al-Taubah, 9:128 [Publisher]

³⁶ Al-Shu'arā', 26:4 [Publisher]

³⁷ Al-Balad, 90:18 [Publisher]

strictly forbidden for all others. For instance, the Holy Qur'ān says:

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَشَدُّ حُبًّا لِلَّهِ³⁸

It also says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ³⁹

At another place it says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا بَطَانَةً مِن دُونِكُمْ⁴⁰

That is to say, do not love the Jews and Christians, nor those who are not righteous.

Reading these verses, the uninformed Christians are misled. They think that Muslims are enjoined not to love Christians and other non-believers, but they do not realize that every word is used with reference to the context. What constitutes love can be entertained for evildoers and the disbelievers only when one partakes of their disbelief and impiety. Ignorant indeed would be the person who enjoined love for the enemies of his faith. We have pointed out several times that love means to look with pleasure on the words, actions, habits, morals, and faith of the beloved, to be pleased with them, and to accept his influence. But this is not possible on the part of a believer with regard to a disbeliever.

A believer will, however, have compassion for the disbeliever and will have full sympathy for him and will

³⁸ ‘And those who believe are stronger in *their* love for Allah.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:166 [Publisher]

³⁹ ‘O ye who believe! take not the Jews and the Christians for friends.’—Al-Mā'idah, 5:52 [Publisher]

⁴⁰ ‘O ye who believe! take not *others* than your own people as intimate friends.’—Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:119 [Publisher]

seek to help him in his physical and spiritual ailments. Allah the Almighty has repeatedly admonished that we should have sympathy for people regardless of their religion, should feed the hungry, procure freedom for slaves, pay off the debts of those burdened with them, and have true sympathy for the whole of mankind. He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ ⁴¹

This means that: ‘God commands you to be just or, even more than just, to be benevolent like a mother to her child, or like a person who is kind to another because of the feelings of kinship.’

لَا يَنْهٰكُمُ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الَّذِيْنَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوْكُمْ فِى الدِّيْنِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ
اَنْ تَبْرُوْهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوْا اِلَيْهِمْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِيْنَ ⁴²

That is: ‘The fact that Allah forbids you from loving the Christians and others should not be taken to mean that He forbids you from doing good or showing compassion and sympathy. No. Be compassionate, sympathetic and just to those who have not fought to kill you, nor have they driven you out of your homes, whether they are Jews or Christians, for Allah loves the people who do so.’

اَتَمَّا يَنْهٰكُمُ اللّٰهُ عَنِ الَّذِيْنَ قَاتَلُوْكُمْ فِى الدِّيْنِ وَآخَرَجُوْكُمْ مِّنْ دِيَارِكُمْ وَظَاهَرُوا
عَلٰى اَخْرَاجِكُمْ اَنْ تَوَلَّوْهُمْ مِّنْ يَّتَوَلَّوْهُمْ فَاُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُوْنَ ⁴³

That is: ‘Allah forbids you from being friendly and intimate with only those who have waged religious wars

⁴¹ Al-Nahl, 16:91 [Publisher]

⁴² Al-Mumtahinah, 60:9 [Publisher]

⁴³ Al-Mumtahinah, 60:10 [Publisher]

against you and have driven you out of your homes, and have aided others in driving you out of your homes. Friendship with them is forbidden, because they are bent upon destroying your faith.'

It is worth remembering that the reality of friendship is sympathy and well wishing. A believer can, therefore, have friendship, sympathy and goodwill for Christians, Jews, and Hindus and can exercise benevolence towards them, but cannot love them. **This is a fine distinction, which should always be kept in mind.**

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān part 2, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 429-436]

2

FAITH, CERTAINTY AND INSIGHT

As far as the belief in God Almighty, the question of metaphors, and the phenomena of here and the hereafter is concerned, the approach of philosophers is very different from that of Prophets.

Faith in the Unseen Taught by Prophets

The main principle followed by the Prophets is that faith proves fruitful only if the unseen is accepted as unseen, and the self-evident testimony of physical senses and absolute mathematical proof is not insisted upon inasmuch as all spiritual merit and worthiness of nearness to the Divine depends upon righteousness, and he alone possesses true righteousness who safeguards himself against the extremes of investigation, multiple denials, and testing every little detail, and is prepared to accept a way that appears safer and preferable to other ways as the truth, out of a sense of precaution. This is faith, and this is what helps open the door of Divine grace and becomes the means of acquiring good fortune here and in the hereafter. When a person establishes himself firmly on faith and then seeks to foster his knowledge through prayer, worship, reflection and observation, God Almighty Himself becomes his Guardian, and, taking him by the hand, leads him from the stage of faith to that of *'Ain-ul-Yaqīn* [certainty by sight.] But all this is achieved only through steadfastness, striving, effort and purification of the ego. He who seeks clarification of all details at the very first stage, and is not prepared to abandon his

false doctrines and evil ways before such clarification, prevents himself from treading upon the path of righteousness and achieving merit. Faith demands belief in certain matters which are still unseen to some degree, that is to say, they are still in a condition which is not established fully by reason, nor has it been perceived through spiritual vision, but is accepted on the basis of probability.

This is the true philosophy of the Prophets by following which, millions of God's creatures have procured heavenly blessings and countless people have arrived at the stage of perfect understanding and many more continue to do so. The perfect certainties which the philosophers sought to achieve hastily and daringly, and failed to achieve, have not only all been achieved with the utmost ease by the faithful ones, but they have reached the stage of that perfect understanding which has not been heard or seen or conceived by any philosopher. As against this the false and deceptive philosophy, of which the newly educated are so fond, and the ill consequences of which have ruined so many of the simple-minded, demands, that until the root and branch of everything is fully established and is clearly revealed, it should never be acknowledged, whether it be God or anything else. The greater philosophers among them who held fast to these principles, called themselves research scholars, and they are also known as atheists. The doctrine of these great philosophers, resulting from their basic principle, is that whereas the existence of God cannot be established undeniably through reason, nor is the being of God visible to the eye, belief in such a God is utterly contrary to the established philosophic doctrine. Thus at the very first step they set God Almighty aside, and repudiate the angels as they

too, like God Almighty, are not visible. Then these philosophers turned their attention to the existence of souls and expressed the view that there was no satisfactory proof that the soul survives death, for it cannot be seen, nor does it disclose its existence in any perceptible manner. On the contrary, souls, after their separation from the body, leave no sign behind, nor do they produce any effect, and belief in their existence is equally contrary to reason. Thereafter, the penetrating sight of the learned philosophers discovered that the limitations of the law and the distinction between lawful and unlawful are contradictory to the basic philosophical principle and express the view that there is no philosophical reason to support the distinction between mother and sister and wife, or the distinction between that which is lawful and that which is unlawful, except in cases in which the harmfulness of something is established by the harm it does. They also opine that nudism is not in any way opposed to reason, and is hygienically beneficial in some respects.

These philosophers have set forth other doctrines also but the sum or the substance of their philosophy is that they do not accept anything without conclusive proof. In their philosophical view no type of misconduct need be discarded, unless it is proved to be hygienically harmful or socially disturbing. These are the superior philosophers. But those of a lower degree, being apprehensive of condemnation by the community, have, to some degree, softened their principles and profess a somewhat doubtful acceptance of God and the hereafter and other concepts of this kind. The superior philosophers regard them as utterly foolish and cowardly, and a source of disgrace, since they claim to be philosophers but do not adhere strictly to the basic principles of philosophy. Therefore

the superior ones do not consider them worthy of the honourable appellation of a philosopher.

[Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 83-88, footnote]

I desire to lead these theoretical philosophers, who are unaware of the love for the Divine and are negligent in their appreciation of His Exalted Being, to the straight path through such persuasive arguments as I am capable of. I have observed that their spiritual condition has become very weak, and unwarranted freedom and weakness of faith have seriously undermined their sincerity, religious resolve, and spiritual condition. They have confused truth with falsehood in an odd manner. The roots of the blessings of religion are faith, confidence, goodwill, obedience of true spiritual guides, and the Divine word, but these people misunderstand religion on account of their wrong philosophy.

It is, therefore, incumbent upon them to discard prejudice and self-approval, and reflect in a simple way upon the question: What is faith and why is it expected to confer any benefit?

Faith and Certainty

Be it known, therefore, that faith means a sincere declaration of the acceptance of the message of a Prophet, out of righteousness and as a matter of wise precaution, purely on the basis of goodwill. That is to say, to proclaim acceptance whole-heartedly, finding that certain reliable factors point in that direction, without waiting for perfect and conclusive proof. The stage when perfect reasons and conclusive arguments become available in support of the truth is designated the stage of certainty through knowledge. When God Almighty, out of His special bounty, should in an extraordinary manner

bestows the lights of guidance, and should acquaint a creature of His with His favours and bounties, and should bestow reason and knowledge from Himself, and opening the doors of visions and revelation should disclose the wonders of Divinity, and should reveal His beauty as the Beloved, that stage is designated understanding, or in other words, certainty by sight and is also called guidance and insight.

When, in consequence of the profound effect of all these experiences, the heart of a lover of God is surcharged with love and devotion to a degree where his whole being is saturated with delight, and heavenly light totally envelops his heart and excludes all darkness and constraint, so that, on account of the perfection of his love and devotion and the climax of his sincerity and loyalty, misfortunes and calamities become a source of delight and sweetness for him, that stage is designated as the stage of being at rest. It is also called salvation, deliverance or certainty by realization.

All these ranks are granted after arriving at the stage of faith. One who is firm in one's faith progressively achieves these ranks. But one who does not adopt the way of faith and demands conclusive, certain, and patent proof of every verity before accepting it, has no relationship with the way of faith and can never become the recipient of the grace of that Almighty and Self-Sufficient Being.

It has ever been the way of Allah—and this is a fine point of the appreciation of the Divine over which the fortunate ones should reflect—that merit and heavenly grace follow only upon faith. The true philosophy of this way is that in the primary stage of faith a person should

avoid a long series of doubts and denials regarding the acceptance of the Absolute Self-Sufficient One, and His power and His promise, and His warning, and His revelations, and His mysteries. For the maintenance of the condition of faith, on which all merit depends, it is necessary that God Almighty should not display all matters of faith as plainly as other realities become apparent to everyone.

[*Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā, Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 2, pp. 70-80]

Faith means acceptance at a stage when knowledge is not yet complete, and the struggle with doubts and suspicions is still in progress. He who believes, that is to say, has faith, on the basis of probability and likelihood and despite weakness and the lack of perfect means of certainty, is accounted righteous in the estimation of the Supreme One. Thereafter, perfect understanding is bestowed on him as a bounty, and he is given to drink of the cup of understanding after partaking of faith. When a pious one, on hearing the call of a Messenger, a Prophet or a commissioned one of God, does not just go about criticizing, but takes that portion which he can recognize and understand on the basis of clear proof the means of acceptance and faith, and considers that which he is unable to understand as metaphorical or allegorical, and thus removing all contradiction out of the way, believes simply and sincerely, then God Almighty, having pity on him and being pleased with his faith, and hearing his supplications, opens the gates of perfect understanding for him and leads him to perfect certainty through visions, revelation and other heavenly signs.

[*Ayyām-uş-Şulh, Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 14, p. 261]

The Word of God directs us: Have faith and you will be delivered. It does not tell us: Demand philosophical

reasons and conclusive proofs in support of the doctrines that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has presented to you, and do not accept them until they are established like mathematical formulae. It is obvious that if the teaching of a Prophet is to be accepted only after being tested by the canons of current knowledge, that would not be faith in the Prophet; inasmuch as every verity when it is established clearly, becomes binding, whether it is set forth by a Prophet or by anyone else. Even if expounded by a vicious person it has to be accepted. That which we would accept by putting our trust in a Prophet, and by affirming his righteousness, must be of a nature which possesses a probability of truth in the estimation of reason and yet leaves room for a foolish person to incline towards its rejection as false; so that by taking the side of truth and affirming the righteousness of a Prophet we may be rewarded for our well-thinking, penetrating intelligence, respectfulness and faith. This is the purport of the teaching of the Holy Qur'ān that we have set forth. But thinkers and philosophers have never followed this way and have always been heedless of faith. They have always been in search of the kind of knowledge which is demonstrated to them as being immediate, incontrovertible and certain.

It should be remembered that God Almighty, by demanding faith in the unseen, does not wish to deprive the believers of certainty of understanding the Divine. Indeed, faith is a ladder for arriving at this certainty of understanding, without which it is in vain to seek true understanding. Those who climb this ladder surely experience for themselves the pure and undefiled spiritual verities. When a sincere believer accepts Divine commands and

directions for the only reason that God Almighty has bestowed them upon him through a righteous bearer, he becomes deserving of the bounty of understanding. That is why God Almighty has established a law for His servants that they should first acknowledge Him by believing in the unseen, so that all the problems they face may be resolved through the bounty of true understanding. But it is a pity that a hasty one does not adopt these ways. The Holy Qur'ān contains the promise of God Almighty that if a person, who accepts the call of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on the basis of faith, seeks to comprehend its reality and strives after such comprehension, the reality will be disclosed to him by means of visions and revelations and his faith will be elevated to the stage of the understanding.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 251-253, footnote].

Salvation Depends on Faith

I affirm repeatedly and emphatically that if religious doctrines had been self-evident like philosophical propositions and mathematical equations, they would certainly not have been considered the basis for achieving salvation. Dear brethren, rest assured that salvation depends upon faith, and faith is related to the unseen. If the underlying reality of things had not been concealed, there would have been no faith, and without faith there would be no salvation. It is faith alone which is the means of winning Divine pleasure. It is a ladder for achieving nearness to God, and a spring for washing away the rust of sin. We are dependent upon God Almighty, and it is faith that discloses this dependence. We are dependent on God Almighty for our salvation and our deliverance from every ill. Such deliverance can be achieved only through faith. The remedy for the torments of this life and the

hereafter is faith. When, through the power of faith, we find that a difficulty is not impossible of resolution, it is resolved for us. It is through the power of faith that we are able to achieve that which appears to be impossible and contrary to reason. It is through the power of faith that miracles and extraordinary events are witnessed, and what is considered impossible happens.

It is through faith that we are convinced of the existence of God. He remained hidden from philosophers, and thinkers could not discover Him; but faith leads to God even a humble one who is clothed in rags, and enables him to converse with Him. The power of faith is the means of contact between a believer and the True Beloved. This power leads a poor humble one who is rejected of mankind to the palace of holiness, which is the throne of Allah and, gradually removing all intervening obstructions, reveals the countenance of the Eternal Beloved.

Arise then, and seek faith and burn the dry and useless tomes of philosophy; only through faith shall you achieve blessings. One particle of faith is better than a thousand volumes of philosophy.

Faith is not only the means of achieving salvation in the hereafter, but also provides deliverance from the torments and curses of this life. We find deliverance from soul-melting sorrows through the blessings of faith. It is faith through which a perfect believer finds comfort and joy in the midst of anxiety, agony, torment and sorrow, and when he is confronted with failure in all directions and all the familiar doors appear locked and barred. Perfect faith removes all feeling of distance and separation. There is no wealth that can be compared to faith. In this

world everyone, with the exception of the believer, is overwhelmed with grief. In this world everyone is afflicted with the agony of loss and unfulfilled desires, except a believer.

Faith! how sweet are your fruits and how fragrant are your flowers; praise be to Allah, how wonderful are your blessings and what beautiful lights shine in you. No one can reach the Pleiades unless he is inspired by you. It has pleased God Almighty that now you should arrive and philosophy should depart. *Nothing can stop His grace.*

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 270-273, footnote].

Progressive Stages of Faith

It is obvious that the primary task and important step we have to undertake is to recognize God. If our recognition of God is defective, doubtful and befogged, our faith cannot be bright and shining. So long as we have no true experience of the recognition of God, through His attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat*, we cannot drink the fresh water of the spring of true comprehension. If we do not deliberately deceive ourselves, we will have to confess that we need our doubts and hesitations to be removed through the Divine attribute of *Raḥīmiyyat*, and we need our hearts to be so powerfully affected by the experience of Divine mercy, grace and power, as to rescue us from the passions that overpower us on account of the weakness of our faith, and turn us to the opposite direction. Is it not true that on arriving in this fleeting world, man becomes involved in a dangerous darkness because his heart is not illumined by the powerful rays of Divine recognition? He is not inspired by the search for the joys of the hereafter and of true prosperity as much as he is attracted to the world and its appendages: wealth,

powers, and governance. If he were to find some prescription that would enable him to abide in this world forever, he would be ready to affirm that he has no desire for heaven and for the bounties of the hereafter. What is the reason for this? Is it not that there is no true faith in the existence of God Almighty, His power, His mercy and His promises?

Thus it is necessary for a seeker after truth to continuously occupy himself with the search for true faith and not to deceive himself by thinking that he is a Muslim who believes in God and His Messenger, and reads the Holy Qur'ān, and shuns associating anything with God, and observes prayer and avoids evils and improprieties.

In the hereafter, only that person will achieve perfect salvation, true prosperity and real happiness who has gained in this life that living and true light which turns a person, together with all his faculties and capacities and designs, towards God Almighty and whereby his lower life dies altogether, and his soul undergoes a righteous change. What is that living and true light? It is the Divinely bestowed capacity, which is designated certainty or perfect comprehension. This is the power that pulls a person with its strong hand out of a dark and fearful pit and places him against a bright and peaceful background.

Before this light is acquired, all righteous actions are by way of habit, and a person is likely to stumble when confronted with the least trial. Without perfect certainty no one's relationship with God is duly adjusted. He who is granted certainty flows like water and rushes like the wind towards God. He consumes everything else like fire and, in trials and misfortunes, displays a firmness like

that of the earth. Recognition of God renders a person insane in the eyes of the world, but sane and wise in the estimation of God. This drink possesses a sweetness which renders the whole body sweet; it is a delicious milk, which relieves him who drinks it of all desire for other bounties. It can be achieved only through such prayers as are offered at the risk of one's life. It is not acquired through the sacrifice of another's blood but through true sacrifice of the ego. How difficult is this task. Ah! how difficult!

[Ayyām-uş-Şulh, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 244-246]

Blessings of Divine Recognition

Those who truly seek God know well that comprehension of God can be achieved only through God Himself, and God alone can bestow full recognition of Himself. This is not a matter of man's own choice. By no contrivance can man discard sin and achieve nearness to God unless he is granted full comprehension. No atonement can be of help, nor is there any way of being purified from sin, except through that perfect comprehension which generates perfect love and perfect fear. These two alone provide a barrier against sin. When the fire of the love and fear of Allah is set ablaze, it reduces all causes of sin to ashes. This holy fire and the foul fires of sin can never coexist. Man cannot desist from evil, nor can he advance in love, until he is blessed with full comprehension, and that does not happen until God Almighty sends down living blessings and miracles.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p.7]

Humbleness is like a seed for faith. By discarding all that is vain, faith begins to sprout. When one spends one's wealth in the cause of Allah, the plant of faith brings

forth shoots which strengthen it to a degree. By exercising control over carnal passions, these branches acquire strength and firmness. By safeguarding all branches of one's trusts and covenants, the tree of faith is enabled to stand firm on its trunk. Then, at the time of bringing forth fruit, the grace of a new capacity is bestowed on it, without which it can bring forth neither fruit nor flowers.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 209, footnote]

Remember, it is never possible to get rid of sin without the certainty of faith. Without certainty, it is not possible to live the life of angels; without it, it is not possible to discard debauchery; without it, it is not possible to undergo a holy change and to be drawn towards God in an extraordinary manner; without it, it is not possible to leave the earth and climb to heaven; without it, it is not possible to have perfect fear of God; without it, it is not possible to tread along the delicate paths of righteousness and to purify one's conduct of all traces of ostentations. Similarly, it is not possible without this certainty to reject worldly riches and honour, and be heedless of the favour of kings and to believe in God alone as one's treasure.

[Nuzūl-ul-Masīḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp.469-470]

Three Categories of the Faithful

Those who submit to God are, in fact, of three types. First, those who, on account of the obstruction of worldly means, are not able to see God's beneficence clearly, and are not inspired by that eagerness which is generated by an appreciation of the grandeur of Divine beneficence; nor are they moved by the love which is inspired by a concept of the greatness of the Benefactor's favours. They casually acknowledge God Almighty as the Creator, but do not contemplate the details of Divine

beneficence which would impress a true concept of the Divine Benefactor upon their minds, inasmuch as the dust of exaggerated regard for material means creates a veil which prevents them from observing the full countenance of the Creator of the means. They are thus unable to appreciate the full beauty of the Bountiful. Their defective comprehension is confused by their regard for the means, and, as they are not able to estimate duly the bounties of God, they do not pay as much attention to Him as would be generated in their minds by a proper appreciation of His favours. Thus, their comprehension is somewhat misty because they put their trust in their own efforts and in the means that are available to them. They also acknowledge formally their obligation towards God on account of His being the Creator and the Provider. As God Almighty does not require of anyone that which is beyond the limits of his intellectual capacity, He only requires of them an expression of gratitude for His favours. In the verse:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ⁴⁴

‘justice’ implies only this kind of obedience.

But above this there is another grade of comprehension which is reached when a person, disregarding the means, clearly observes God’s gracious and beneficent hand and emerges completely out of the veils of material means. At that stage, he realizes the futility and falsity of expressions like: ‘I obtained this success through proper irrigation of my fields;’ or ‘I obtained this success through my own efforts;’ or ‘I achieved my purpose through the favour of X;’ or ‘I was saved from ruin by the care of Y.’

⁴⁴ ‘Verily, Allah enjoins justice.’—Al-Nahl, 16:91 [Publisher]

Rather, he beholds only one Being and one Power and one Benefactor and one Hand. Then he views the favours of God Almighty clearly without the least obstruction resulting from associating means with the Benefactor. This view is so clear and certain that in his worship of the true Benefactor he does not contemplate Him as being absent but conceives Him as being present. Such worship is designated by the Holy Qur'ān as *Ihsān*. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has himself attributed this meaning to *Ihsān*, as reported in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim*.

There is yet another grade above this, which is:

إِنَّمَا ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ⁴⁵

It means that when a person continues to view Divine favours, without the association of material means, and worships God conceiving Him to be present and to be the direct Benefactor, he begins to have personal love for God.

The continuous contemplation of beneficence necessarily generates in the heart of the beneficiary love for the Benefactor, Whose unlimited favours surround him on all sides. In such a situation he does not worship the Benefactor merely out of an appreciation of His bounties, but out of personal love for Him like the love of an infant for its mother. At this stage he not only views God at the time of his worship but is also filled with delight like a true lovers. This is the grade which God Almighty has designated to be like beneficence between kindred, and this is the grade which is indicated in the verse:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ وَآَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا⁴⁶

⁴⁵ 'Giving like to the next of kin.'—Al-Naḥl, 16:91 [Publisher]

which throws light on the verse:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُ بِالْعَدْلِ وَالْإِحْسَانِ وَإِيتَاءِ ذِي الْقُرْبَىٰ ⁴⁷

Here God Almighty sets out the three grades of comprehension of the Divine. The third grade is that of personal love, at which all personal desires are consumed, and the heart becomes so filled with love as a crystal vial is filled with perfume. This grade is also referred to in the verse:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَشْرِي نَفْسَهُ ابْتِغَاءَ مَرْضَاتِ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ ذُو الْفَضْلِ الْعَظِيمِ ⁴⁸

This means that: ‘Of the believers there are some who sell their lives in return for the pleasure of Allah. These are the ones upon whom Allah is Most Compassionate.’

Again it is said:

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ⁴⁹

That is: ‘The truly delivered are those who commit themselves wholly to God and, recalling His favours, worship Him as if they behold Him. Such have their reward with God and they have no fear, nor do they grieve.’

That is to say, God and His love become their whole purpose, and their reward is Divine favours. At another place it is said:

يُطْعَمُونَ وَالطَّعَامُ عَلَىٰ حَبِّهِ مَشْكُونًا وَيَتَزِيمُونَ أَسِيرًا ۝

⁴⁶ ‘Celebrate the praises of Allah as you celebrated the praises of your fathers, or even more than that.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:201 [Publisher]

⁴⁷ ‘Verily, Allah enjoins justice, and the doing of good to others and giving like kindered.’—Al-Nahl, 16:91 [Publisher]

⁴⁸ Al-Baqarah, 2:208 [Publisher]

⁴⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:113 [Publisher]

لَا تَمَّا نَطْعَمَكُم لِرَوْجِ اللَّهِ لَا تُرِيدُ مِنْكُمْ جَزَاءً وَلَا شُكْرًا ٥٠

That is: ‘Believers are those who, out of their love for God, feed the needy, the orphans and the captives saying: We feed you in order to win the pleasure of Allah; we do not desire anything in return or any expression of gratitude from you.’

These verses show clearly that the Holy Qur’ān has described the highest grade of Divine worship and righteous action as that which is inspired by true love of God and sincere seeking of His pleasure. This excellent teaching, which is set out so clearly in the Holy Qur’ān, is not explained with such clarity and detail in the Gospels. God Almighty has designated this religion as Islām, so as to indicate that man should worship God not out of selfish motives, but out of spontaneous eagerness.

Islām means discarding all desires and submitting to Divine will. In this world, no religion other than Islām lays down such objectives. There is no doubt that for the demonstration of His mercy God has promised the believers diverse types of bounties; but He has instructed those believers who are eager to achieve the highest grade that they should worship Him out of spontaneous personal love.

[Nūr-ul-Qur’ān, No. II, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 9, pp. 437-441]

Remember, the verse:

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ
وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ٥١

⁵⁰ Al-Dahr, 76:9-10 [Publisher]

⁵¹ ‘Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allah, and is the doer of good, shall have his reward with his Lord. No fear *shall*

indicates the three grades of the perfection of good fortune, namely *fanā* [extinction of the self], *baqā* [revival] and *liqā* [communion.] ‘*Complete submission to Allah*’ means to surrender to Him all human faculties and organs, and whatever belongs to oneself, and to dedicate everything to the cause of God. This condition is described as *fanā* [extinction of the self.] When a person, conforming with the purpose of this verse, submits the whole of his being and his faculties to God Almighty, and dedicates himself to His cause, and wholly refrains from all personal moves and rests, then undoubtedly he experiences a type of death. The Sufis designate such death as *fanā*.

Then, the expression, ‘*and acts righteously*’, points to the stage of *baqā* [revival.] When a person, after complete surrender and abandonment of all personal desires and the cessation of all personal movement, begins to move in obedience to Divine direction, such revival is called *baqā*. Then follows the verse:

فَلَمَّا أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ⁵²

This signifies affirmation, acceptance and reward and negates fear and grief. This condition refers to *liqā* [communion.] For, when a person achieves such a high grade in his comprehension of the Divine, certainty, trust and love as to exclude all imagination and fancy and doubt concerning the reward of his sincerity and faith and loyalty, which becomes so certain and absolute and visible and perceptible as if he is already enjoying it, and

come upon such, neither shall they grieve.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:113

[Publisher]

⁵² Ibid.

his belief in the Being of God Almighty becomes so certain as if he is beholding Him, and he loses sight of all fear and grief, past or present, which disappear altogether and every spiritual bounty appears present before him, that condition which is free from all constraint and is secure against every doubt and apprehension and is free from all anxiety of waiting, is designated *liqā'* [communion.] This grade of *liqā'* is clearly indicated by the word *Muḥsin*, inasmuch as according to the interpretation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) *Iḥsān* is the condition in which a worshipper establishes such a relationship with God Almighty as if he is beholding Him. The grade of *liqā'* is achieved perfectly when Divine reflection completely covers the humanity of the seeker as iron is covered by the fire in which it is heated, so much so, that the physical eye perceives nothing but the fire. This is the stage at which some seekers have stumbled and have conceived the symbolic relationship as the physical union of the two beings.

Some Sufis have designated the saints who have arrived at the stage of *liqā'* or who have partaken of it to a degree, as children of God. On account of their having been completely covered by certain Divine attributes, just as a child has some resemblance to his father in respect of his form and features, in the same way, they too, in consequence of having adorned themselves reflectively with certain Divine attributes, acquire some resemblance to the beautiful attributes of God Almighty. Such titles are not commonly used in the idiom of the Shariah, but those invested with the quality of spiritual comprehension have derived them from the Holy Qur'ān; as Allah the Exalted has said:

فَاذْكُرُوا اللَّهَ كَذِكْرِكُمْ آبَاءَكُمْ أَوْ أَشَدَّ ذِكْرًا⁵³

That is: ‘Remember Allah with the eagerness with which you remember your fathers.’

It is obvious that if the metaphorical use of these expressions had been forbidden by Shariah, God Almighty would have safeguarded His Word against such use of the expressions as might have allowed others to use them.

At this stage of *liqā’* [communion], a person sometimes does bear some characteristics which appear to be beyond human capacity and have the colour of Divine power. For instance, our lord and master, the Chief of the Prophets, Ḥaḍrat Khātām-ul-Anbiyā’ (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) threw a handful of gravel at the enemy during the battle of Badr, not with any prayer but only with his spiritual power, and that handful of gravel exhibited Divine power and affected the hostile forces in such an extraordinary manner that not a single one was left who’s eyes were not affected by it...

In the same way, another miracle of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), which relates to the splitting of the moon, was manifested by Divine power. It was not the consequence of any prayer. It was manifested by the mere pointing of his finger, which was charged with Divine power. There are many other miracles of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), which were not accompanied by any prayer but were manifested through his person as the symbol of Divine power....

⁵³ Al-Baqarah, 2:201 [Publisher]

My purpose in stating all this is that when a person arrives at the grade of *liqā'*, he manifests Divine powers on the occasions of the upsurge of this grade. Anyone who spends some time in the intimate company of such a person witnesses some of these manifestations, inasmuch as during the upsurge of this condition, such a one reflectively manifests Divine attributes, so much so that his mercy becomes the mercy of God, and his wrath becomes the wrath of God. Very often when he says, even without a prayer, that such and such should happen, it happens. If he looks upon anyone with anger such a person is afflicted with some calamity, and if he looks upon someone with compassion, that person becomes the object of Divine mercy. Just as the Divine command: 'Be', always produces the desired result, in the same way, when such a person says, 'Be', in the state of the upsurge of *liqā'*, it does not fail to produce the desired result. The reason for the manifestation of these extraordinary happenings is that such a person, on account of his strong relationship with God, takes on reflectively a Divine complexion and passes completely into the control of Divine manifestations, and the True Beloved takes him into His embrace and removes all intervening obstructions on account of his closeness to Him; and as He Himself is Blessed, He blesses that person's words, deeds, movement, rest, food, dress, house, time, and all his belongings. In such a state everything that comes in contact with him is blessed even without prayer. Blessings that he observes, and whose fragrance he perceives, descend upon his house and upon the doors of his house. When he travels, God Almighty keeps him company with all His blessings, and when he comes home he brings with him an ocean of light. In short, he becomes a wonderful per-

son whose true condition is known only to God Almighty.

In this context, it should be clearly understood that once the condition of:

54 *أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ*

is fully established, which the Sufis designate as *fanā*, and which the Holy Qur'ān describes as steadfastness, the grade of *baqā* and *liqā'* follow immediately upon it. In other words, when a person empties himself completely of his condition as a creature and altogether discards desire and design and arrives at the stage of perfect surrender, he immediately experiences the stage of *baqā*. But until the condition of *fanā* is fully established, and leaning wholly towards God Almighty becomes a natural characteristic, the stage of *baqā* cannot be reached. That stage is reached only when obedience ceases to be an effort, and the green and waving branches of obedience sprout forth from the heart like a natural growth and all that is considered one's own truly becomes God's, and just as other people delight in indulgence, such a person's whole delight centres on worship and remembrance of God, and the pleasures of God take the place of his personal desires.

When this condition of *baqā* is fully established and saturates the being of the seeker, and becomes his permanent characteristic, and he witnesses a light descending from heaven which removes all obstructions, and a fine, sweet and delicious feeling of love which had not been perceived before is generated in the heart, and a coolness

⁵⁴ 'He who submits himself completely to Allah.'—Al-Baqarah, 2:113 [Publisher]

and a contentment and a peace and a delight are experienced like the experience of suddenly meeting and embracing a long separated friend, and the bright, delicious, blessed, comforting, eloquent, fragrant and gladdening words of God begin to descend at all times, whether sitting, standing, asleep or awake, like a cool, pleasant and fragrant breeze which comes across a garden of flowers and begins to blow in the morning and brings with it a delight and intoxication, and the seeker is so drawn towards God Almighty that he finds it impossible to live without a lover-like contemplation of Him, and not only is he ready to sacrifice his wealth, life, honour, children and all he has, but has already sacrificed all of it in his heart, and he feels such a strong pull the nature of which he is not able to determine; and he perceives a brilliant light illumining his inner self like the dawning of the day; and he observes streams of devotion, love and loyalty flowing mightily through himself and feels every moment **as if God Almighty has descended upon his heart**; when this condition is experienced in all its aspects it is then that a seeker should be happy and should express his gratitude to the True Beloved, for that is the ultimate stage which is called *liqā'*.

At this stage, the seeker feels as if he has been washed in many holy waters, and has been created anew by casting out every trace of his ego, and the throne of the Lord of the worlds has been set inside him, and that God's shining countenance with all its winning beauty has appeared before him.

It should, however, be remembered that the last two stages, *baqā* and *liqā'*, are not achieved through one's own effort but are Divine bounties. Effort is confined to the stage of *fanā* and the journey of all righteous seekers

terminates at that stage, and the circle of human excellences is thus completed. When the pure minded seeker traverses the stage of *fanā* as it should be traversed, it is Divine practice that the breeze of Divine bounty immediately conveys him to the stage of *baqā* and *liqā*'.

It is thus obvious that all the travails and labours of this journey are up to the stage of *fanā*, and thereafter no scope is left for human effort, labour and striving. A bright flame of Divine love thereafter falls upon the pure love of the seeker after God, the Noble and Exalted. Through the union of the two, a bright and perfect reflection of the Holy Spirit is generated in the human heart. At the stage of *liqā*' the light of the Holy Spirit is very bright and the extraordinary manifestations to which we have already referred proceed from the seeker because the light of the Holy Spirit always attends upon him and dwells within him. He is never separated from this light, nor does it ever depart from him. It issues from him with every breath, falls with his glance upon everything and manifests its illumination in his words. This light is called the Holy Spirit. But this is not the real Holy Spirit. The real Holy Spirit is in heaven. This Holy Spirit is a reflection which dwells permanently in the bosom, heart and brain of the holy person and does not leave him even for a moment.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 63-72]

Every true seeker naturally wishes to know what he should do to achieve this high stage of converse with the Divine. The answer is that this stage is a new existence at which one is given new faculties, new powers and a new life. This new existence cannot be achieved without the surrender of the previous existence. When the previous existence is wholly discarded through a true and real

sacrifice, which means the sacrifice of life, honour and wealth and all other trappings of the ego, this second existence immediately takes its place.

The signs of the discarding of the previous existence are that previous characteristics and emotions are replaced by new characteristics and new emotions, and one's nature undergoes a tremendous change. All states of existence, relating to morals, faith and worship, are so transformed that they appear to take on a new colour.

In short, one becomes a new person and God Almighty also appears anew. New delights, previously unknown, are experienced in gratitude, steadfastness and remembrance of God. One feels clearly that he has full trust in his Lord and cares the least for everything other than Him. The contemplation of the Being of God Almighty overwhelms the heart to such a degree that every being other than Him disappears altogether and all material means appear useless and contemptible. Devotion and loyalty surge up to such a degree that every calamity appears light, and even the experience of calamities and misfortunes is perceived as a delight. When all these signs are perceived, it should be realized that the previous existence has suffered a total death.

Such a death invests a seeker with wonderful powers to exercise in the cause of God. He is given the power to perform all those heavy tasks which others only talk about but cannot perform, and to carry the burdens that others only estimate but cannot lift. He does all this, not of his own strength, but with the assistance of a great Divine power, which renders him firmer than the mountains, and bestows upon him a faithful heart. He is then able, for the glory of God Almighty, to do such things

and manifest such devotion as is beyond the power of man. He cuts asunder from all besides Allah, and removes all intervening barriers and obstructions. He is tested and persecuted and encounters diverse types of trials and is afflicted with such calamities and misfortunes as would have destroyed mountains and darkened the sun and the moon; but he remains steadfast and endures all hardships cheerfully. Even if he is ground to dust by the mortar and pestle of calamities, no sound proceeds from him except: *'I stand with God'*. When a person arrives at this stage, he rises above the conditions of this world and is given, by way of reflection, all of the guidance and high status that were bestowed upon previous Prophets and Messengers, and he becomes their heir and their deputy.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 233-237]

The Soul at Rest

The third question is: what are the spiritual states?... According to the Holy Qur'ān, '*Nafs-e-Muṭma'innah*' [the Soul at Rest] is the source of spiritual states that conveys a person from the stage of a moral being to that of a godly being, as Allah the Exalted, has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّفْسُ الْمُطْمَئِنَّةُ ۝ اذْجِى إِلَىٰ رَبِّكَ رَاضِيَةً مُّرْضِيَةً ۝
فَاذْخُلِي فِي عِبَادِي ۝ وَادْخُلِي جَنَّاتِي ۝⁵⁵

That is: 'O Soul at Rest with thy Lord, return to thy Lord, He is well pleased with thee and thou are well pleased with Him. So join My true servants and enter My garden.'

The highest spiritual condition man can achieve in this

⁵⁵ Al-Fajr, 89:28-31 [Publisher]

life is to be at peace with God Almighty and all his comfort, joy and delight should be centred in God. This is the condition called the heavenly life, whereby a person is granted heaven in return for his perfect devotion and loyalty. Other people await the promised heaven but such a person enjoys heaven in this very life. Arriving at this stage, a person realizes that the worship which is prescribed for him is truly a nourishment for the soul upon which his spiritual life largely depends, and that to arrive at that condition he need not wait for another life; rather he can attain it in this very life. At this point we come to realize that all the reproof that '*Nafs-e-Lawwāmah*' [the reproaching self] administers to him on his unclean life, and yet fails to rouse fully his longing for virtue and to generate real disgust against his evil desires and to bestow full power of adherence to virtue, is transformed by this urge which is the beginning of the development of the Soul at Rest. On arriving at this stage, a person becomes capable of achieving complete prosperity. All passions of the self begin to wither and a strengthening breeze begins to blow upon the soul, so that the person concerned looks upon his previous weaknesses with remorse. At that time nature and habits experience a complete transformation and the person is drawn far away from his previous condition. He is washed and cleansed, and God inscribes love of virtue upon his heart and casts out from it the impurity of vice with His own hand. All the forces of truth enter the citadel of his heart, and righteousness occupies all the battlements of his nature, and truth become victorious and falsehood lays down its arms and is put to flight. The hand of God governs his heart and he walks under God's shadow. God Almighty has indicated all this in the following verses:

أُولَٰئِكَ كَتَبَ فِي قُلُوبِهِمُ الْإِيمَانَ وَأَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ⁵⁶
 وَزَيَّنَّاهُ فِي قُلُوبِكُمْ ذِكْرَهُ لِيَكُمُ الْكُفْرَ وَالْفُسُوقَ وَالْإِضْيَانُ وَلِئِنَّكَ
 هُمْ الرَّاشِدُونَ ۝ فَضَلَّ عَنْهُ اللَّهُ وَنِعْمَةً ۖ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ۝⁵⁷
 جَاءَ الْحَقُّ وَزَهَّقَ ابْنُ الْبَيْتِ إِنَّ الْبَاطِلَ كَانَ زَهُوقًا⁵⁸

These verses mean that: ‘These are the ones in whose hearts Allah has inscribed faith with His own hand and whom He has helped with the Holy Spirit.’

‘O believers, Allah has made faith attractive to you and has instilled its beauty and grace in your hearts. And He has made your hearts averse to disbelief, wickedness and disobedience and has impressed upon your hearts the repugnance for evil ways. All this has come about through the grace and favour of Allah.’

‘Truth has arrived and falsehood has fled. How could falsehood ever stand up to truth.’

All this pertains to the spiritual states which a person attains at the third stage. No one can acquire true insight unless he arrives at this condition. The fact that God inscribes faith on their hearts with His own hand and helps them with the Holy Spirit means that no one can achieve true purity and righteousness without His help. At the stage of ‘the reproaching self’, a person repents time and again, yet he keeps falling down, and begins to despair and to consider his condition beyond remedy. He remains in this situation for a period and when the appointed time comes, a light which possesses Divine power descends upon him at night or during the day. With the descent of

⁵⁶ Al-Mujādalah, 58:23 [Publisher]

⁵⁷ Al-Hujurāt, 49:8-9 [Publisher]

⁵⁸ Banī Isrāʾīl, 17:82 [Publisher]

that light, he undergoes a wonderful change and he perceives the control of a hidden hand, and beholds a wonderful world. At that time he realizes that God exists, and his eyes are filled with a light they did not possess before.

The question is, how shall we discover that path and how shall we acquire that light? Be it known that in this world every effect has a cause and behind every move there is a mover. For the acquisition of every type of knowledge there is an appointed way, called the straight path. Nothing can be achieved in this world without conformity to the rules that nature has laid down in this respect from the very beginning. The law of nature teaches us that to achieve any objective there is a straight path and that the objective in question can be achieved only by following that path. For instance, if we are sitting in a dark room, the straight path for obtaining the light of the sun is for us to open the window that faces the sun. When we do that, the light of the sun instantly enters the room and illuminates it. Thus it is obvious that for the acquisition of God's love and real grace there must be some window, and there must be an appointed method for the acquisition of pure spirituality. That way is that we should seek the straight path which leads to spirituality, just as we seek a straight path for the achievement of all other purposes. Does that method consist in seeking to meet God only through the exercise of our reason and by following our self-appointed ways? Can the doors that can only be opened by His powerful hands yield to our logic and philosophy? Can we find the Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting God through our own devices? Certainly not. The only straight path for the achievement of this purpose is that we should first devote our lives, together

with all our faculties, to the cause of God Almighty, and should then occupy ourselves with supplication for meeting Him, and should thus find God through God Himself.

A Lovely Prayer

The most lovely prayer which instructs us concerning the time and occasion of supplication, and depicts before us the picture of spiritual zeal is the one that God, the Beneficent, has taught in the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'ān.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ۝⁵⁹

‘Every possible praise belongs to Allah alone, Who is the Creator and Sustainer of all the worlds.’

الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ۝⁶⁰

‘He provides for us out of His mercy before any action proceeds from us, and after we have acted He rewards our actions out of His mercy.’

مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ۝⁶¹

‘He alone is the Master of the Day of Judgement. He has not committed that day to anyone else.’

إِلَهِكَ تَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝⁶²

‘O You Who comprehends all these attributes, we worship You alone and seek Your help in all our affairs.’

The use of the plural pronoun ‘we’ in this context indicates that all our faculties are occupied in His worship

⁵⁹ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:1-2 [Publisher]

⁶⁰ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:3 [Publisher]

⁶¹ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:4 [Publisher]

⁶² Al-Fātiḥah, 1:5 [Publisher]

and are prostrate at His threshold. Every person by virtue of his inner faculties is a community and a nation. The prostration of one's entire faculties before God constitutes the condition referred to as Islām.

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ⁶³

‘Guide us along the straight path and establish us firmly on it; show us the path of those on whom You have bestowed Your bounties and favours.’

عَنِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝⁶⁴

‘And save us from the paths of those who incur Your wrath, and could not reach You and lost their way.’

Āmīn. O Allah, accept our supplication.

These verses tell us that Divine bounties and favours are bestowed only upon those who offer their lives as sacrifice in the cause of God and, devoting themselves wholly to and being occupied entirely with His pleasure, continue to supplicate so that they might be granted all the spiritual bounties that a human being can receive by way of nearness to God, meeting Him and hearing His words. With this supplication they worship God through all their faculties, eschew sin and remain prostrate at His threshold. They safeguard themselves against all vice and shun the ways of God's wrath. As they seek God with high resolve and perfect sincerity, they find Him and are filled with the cups of Divine knowledge....

Steadfastness in Faith

The true and perfect grace that conveys a person to the

⁶³ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

⁶⁴ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

spiritual world depends upon absolute steadfastness, by which is meant the degree of sincerity and faithfulness that cannot be shaken by any trial. It means a relationship with the Divine, which should be so strong that it cannot be cut by a sword or consumed by fire or damaged by any other calamity. The death of dear ones or separation from them should not interfere with it, nor should fear of dishonour affect it, nor should a painful death move the heart away from it in the least degree. Thus this door is very narrow and this path is very hard. Alas, how difficult this is! Alas, how very difficult!!

This is indicated by Allah the Glorious in the following verse:

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ آبَاؤُكُمْ وَأَبْنَاؤُكُمْ وَإِخْوَانُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ كَسَبْتُمْ بِذُلِّكُمْ وَبَنَاتُكُمْ وَأَمْوَالٌ لَكُمْ يَتَرْتَضُونَهَا
أَحَبُّ إِلَيْكُمْ مِنْ اللَّهِ وَرَسُولِهِ وَجِهَادٍ فِي سَبِيلِهِ فَتَرْتَضُوا حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ اللَّهُ بِأَمْرٍ
يَاْمُرُهُ وَاللَّهُ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الْفَاسِقِينَ ٥⁶⁵

Meaning that: ‘Tell them: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your wives and your kinsfolk and the wealth that you have acquired with great effort, and the trade the dullness of which you apprehend, and the dwellings that you fancy, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah pronounces His Judgement. Allah will never guide the disobedient people.’

This verse clearly shows that people who put aside the will of God and give preference to their relatives and their properties, are evildoers in the estimation of God. They will surely be ruined because they preferred

⁶⁵ Al-Taubah, 9:24 [Publisher]

something to God.

This is the third stage in which a person becomes godly who welcomes thousands of calamities for the sake of God, and leans towards Him with such sincerity and devotion, as if he has no one related to him except God, and all others have died. The truth is that until we submit ourselves to death we cannot behold the Living God. The day our physical life undergoes death is the day of the manifestation of God. We are blind until we become blind to the sight of all besides God. We are dead until we become like a corpse in the hand of God. It is only when we face God completely that we acquire the steadfastness that overcomes all passions of the self; and such steadfastness brings about the death of the life which is devoted to selfish purposes.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 377-383]

Personal Merit and Relationship with God

There are three types of people who partake of heavenly signs. First there are those who possess no merit in themselves and have no relationship with God Almighty. On account of their intellectual appropriateness they experience true dreams and visions that are not characterized by any sign indicating their acceptability to God and their being loved by Him, nor are they of any benefit for them. Thousands of wicked and vicious people share such experiences with them. It is often observed that despite such dreams and visions their conduct is not praiseworthy and their faith is very weak, so much so that they do not have the courage to bear true witness and they do not fear God as much as they fear the world and they cannot separate themselves from the wicked. They dare not bear such true testimony as might offend a person of high

status. They are slothful and lazy in respect of religious obligations and are wholly preoccupied with worldly anxieties and grief. They deliberately support falsehood and abandon truth. They are guilty of dishonesty at every step and some of them do not even restrain themselves from vice and sin and have recourse to every unlawful device for the purpose of acquiring worldly benefits. The moral condition of some of them is deplorable and they are riddled with envy, miserliness, self-conceit, arrogance and pride. They have recourse to every meanness and are characterized with diverse types of shameful ills. Some of them see only evil dreams, of which a number come true, as if their brains have been fashioned only for evil and ill-omened dreams. They are not capable of having dreams that benefit them or indicate something good for another person. Their dreams are of a category which might be described as resembling the experience of a person who perceives smoke from a distance but sees neither the light of the fire nor feels its warmth. Such people have nothing to do with God and spiritual matters; they have been given only smoke which yields no light.

The second category of people who see true dreams or receive revelations are those who have some relationship with God but that relationship is not perfect. Their dreams and revelations resemble the experience of a person who perceives the light of fire from a long distance in a dark and cold night, which enables him to avoid pot-holes, thorns, rocks, serpents and wild beasts, but which cannot save him from dying of cold. If such a person does not arrive within the warm circle of the fire, he is also destroyed in the same manner as the one who walks in the dark.

The third category of people who experience true dreams

and revelations can be compared to a man, who, on a dark and cold night, is not only guided by the bright light of a fire, but actually enters its warm circle, and is fully safeguarded against the effects of the cold. Only those people arrive at this stage who burn up the garment of low passions in the fire of love for the Divine and adopt a life of bitterness for the sake of God. They perceive death ahead of them and run forward to meet it. They accept every torment in the cause of God. For the sake of God, they become enemies of their ego and exhibit such a degree of strength of faith against it that even angels marvel at it. They are spiritual champions and all satanic assaults prove utterly ineffective against their spiritual strength. They are truly faithful and devoted. Scenes of worldly pleasures cannot mislead them nor can they be turned away from their True Beloved by their love of wife and children. In short, no bitterness can frighten them nor can any physical pleasure bar their approach towards God. No relationship can disrupt their relationship with God.

There are three spiritual grades, of which the first is called certainty by inference, the second is called certainty by sight, and the third blessed and perfect condition is called certainty by experience. Human comprehension cannot become perfect nor can it be washed clean of all impurities until it arrives at the stage of certainty by experience, since this stage does not depend only on observation, but envelops the human heart as an immediate experience; and the seeker, plunging into the flaming fire of Divine love, totally negates his ego. At this stage human comprehension moves from theory to experience and the lower life is utterly consumed. Such a man is seated in the lap of God Almighty. Just as a piece of iron, when heated in fire, assumes the

appearance and qualities of fire, in the same way, a seeker who has arrived at this stage is invested reflectively with Divine attributes. He surrenders himself so completely to the pleasure of God that he speaks under the direction of God, sees under the direction of God, hears under the direction of God, and moves under the direction of God, as if there is only God inside his mantle. His humanity is completely subordinated to Divine manifestations. This subject is delicate and is above common understanding; I shall, therefore, not explore it further.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 22-25]

Stages of Spiritual Fulfilment

The word *Aflaḥa* is repeated six times in these verses⁶⁶. In the first verse its use is explicit as is said:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ ۝⁶⁷

In the other verses it is expressed through the conjunctive. In the lexicon the meaning of *Aflaḥa* is أَصْبَرَ إِلَى الْفَلَاحِ i.e., one was turned towards his object of success and made to move towards it. According to this meaning, the first move of a believer towards achieving his objective is humility in his prayer, an act that involves the abandonment of pride and arrogance. The objective attained thereby is that the self adopts the habit of humbleness and becomes ready and attuned to establishing a relationship with God.

The second step towards fulfilment is the abandonment

⁶⁶ The reference is to the opening verses of Sūrah Al-Mu'minūn, the twenty-third chapter of the Holy Qur'an. [Publisher]

⁶⁷ 'Surely, success does come to the believers, who are humble in their Prayers.'—Al-Mu'minūn, 23:2-3 [Publisher]

of vain thinking and pursuits, for until a believer acquires the strength to abandon vain pursuits for the sake of God, which is not a difficult matter, it is unreasonable to expect that he will be able to turn away from such pursuits from which he derives some benefit or pleasure, and which are difficult to abandon. This shows that after the abandonment of pride the next step is the giving up of vain pursuits in consequence of which some relationship is established with God Almighty and, as a result, faith becomes stronger than before. This relationship is feeble because the relationship with vain pursuits is also feeble and by discarding a weak relationship one is rewarded with a relationship which is also weak.

The third step towards spiritual fulfilment is to spend one's wealth in the cause of Allah, which is a greater sacrifice than turning away from vain pursuits, as wealth is earned with effort and is something useful, and is also a source of prosperity and comfort. This sacrifice requires stronger faith than the giving up of vain pursuits. Consequently, faith is strengthened further and the relationship with God is likewise fostered. This purifies the self because the sacrifice of wealth for the sake of God is not possible without such purification.

The fourth step is the restraint of passions against unlawful indulgence, which is a stronger attachment than attachment to wealth, for wealth is spent in the pursuit of one's passions. To control passion for the sake of God is a greater sacrifice than the sacrifice of wealth. Consequently, the abandonment of the pursuit of passions strengthens relationship with God, for whatever a person gives up for the sake of God, he is granted something better in its place.

لطف او ترك طالبان نه كند كس به كار پش زيان نه كند
 بر كه آن راه جست يافته است تافت آن رو كه سر نتافته است⁶⁸

The fifth step is to discard the ego altogether in the cause of God. This means to render back to God that which has been committed to one as a trust. At this stage a believer is required to modify his relationship to everything that is bestowed upon him as if all of it were a trust to be devoted to the cause of God. This is the meaning of the verse:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ⁶⁹

A person's life and wealth and all his sources of comfort are trusts committed to him by God; rendering them back is obligatory on the trustee. The sacrifice of the ego, therefore, means that the trust should be rendered back to God Almighty, and also that one's covenant of faith with God should be duly fulfilled and the obligations that one owes to his fellow beings should be fully discharged as a true sacrifice, inasmuch as the complete fulfilment of all aspects of righteousness also amounts to a type of death. In this context fulfilment means that when a believer spends his life in the cause of God and carries into effect all aspects of righteousness, Divine lights envelop his being and invest him with spiritual beauty, as the bones are rendered beautiful by being clothed in flesh.... Both

⁶⁸ His grace does not forsake the seekers;
 In His path no one suffers loss.
 Whoever seeks this path, finds it;
 Bright becomes the face that does not turn away from Him.

[Publisher]

⁶⁹ 'And who are watchful of their trusts and their covenants.'—Al-Mu'minūn, 23:9 [Publisher]

these states have been described by God Almighty as garments. Righteousness too has been described as a garment, as Allah says:

رِبَاسُ الْتَّقْوَى⁷⁰

The flesh with which the bones are clothed has also been described as a garment, as Allah says:

فَكَسَوْنَا الْعِظَمَ لَحْمًا⁷¹

.... It should be remembered that the fifth stage is the final stage of the spiritual journey. When that stage reaches perfection, it is followed by the sixth stage, which is a pure bounty, and is bestowed upon the believer without any further effort or toil. Effort has nothing to do with it. In other words, just as the believer forsakes his self for the sake of God, and is granted a new soul....; in the same way, a believer who dedicates his life to the cause of God out of personal love for God, is honoured with the spirit of God's personal love which is accompanied by the Holy Spirit. God's personal love is a spirit and the Holy Spirit is not something apart from it; there is no separation between God's love and the Holy Spirit. That is why we have mostly mentioned God's personal love without mentioning the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as the two are essential to each other. When this spirit descends upon a believer, worship ceases to be a burden, and he is invested with such strength and pleasure that it prompts him to worship and remember God out of the eagerness of love and not through conscious effort. Such a believer continuously attends upon

⁷⁰ 'Raiment of Righteousness.'—Al-A'rāf 7:27 [Publisher]

⁷¹ 'Then We clothed the bones with flesh.'—Al-Mu'minūn.—23:15
[Publisher]

the threshold of God, like the angel Gabriel, and is granted permanent nearness of the Lord of Honour, as God Almighty has said:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ۝⁷²

That is: ‘The perfect believers are those who are ever present before God and themselves guard their prayers.’

At that stage a believer deems his prayer essential for nurturing his spiritual life without which he cannot survive. This stage cannot be achieved without the spirit which descends from God Almighty upon a believer. When a believer discards his life for the sake of God Almighty he deserves to be given a new life.

All this shows that according to sane reason, these are the six stages which have to be traversed by a believer who seeks the perfection of his spiritual being, and even cursory reflection would show that a believer must pass through six conditions during the course of his spiritual journey. The reason for this is that until a person succeeds in establishing a perfect relationship with God, his imperfect ego loves five vicious conditions, and the discarding of the love of each condition requires a motive which should enable him to overcome that love so that a new love may take its place.

The first condition which a person loves is one of heedlessness in which he is at a distance from God Almighty. His ego is in a sort of disbelief, and he is drawn towards arrogance and hard-heartedness and does not at all partake of humility and meekness and lowliness. He loves this condition and regards it as the best for himself.

⁷² Al-Mu'minūn, 23:10 [Publisher]

When Divine favour designs his reform, some event or calamity impresses the grandeur and fear and power of God Almighty upon his heart, in consequence of which he becomes humble and his love of pride, arrogance and heedlessness is altogether wiped out. It is often observed that when the whip of Divine terror strikes in a fearful manner, it bends down the necks of even daring evildoers; it awakens them from the slumber of heedlessness and makes them humble and meek. This is the first stage of turning to God available to a fortunate one through observing Divine grandeur and awe or through some other means. Although he loved his heedless and unrestrained life, he has to give it up as it yields to a stronger and opposite influence.

The second condition is that though such a believer does turn towards God Almighty in some measure, this change is still affected by the impurity of vain talk, actions and pursuits that he loves. He sometimes experiences humility in prayer but vain pursuits and associations and indulgences continue to preoccupy him. In a sense he oscillates between two states.

واعظاں کیں جلوہ بر محراب و ممبر سے کنند

چوں بخلوت سے روند آں کار دیگر سے کنند⁷³

Thereafter, if Divine favour wishes to save him from ruin, another greater manifestation of Divine grandeur, awe and power descends upon his heart which strengthens his faith and consumes all his vain thoughts and tendencies. It generates in his heart such love for the Lord of Honour as overcomes his love for vain pursuits

⁷³ *The preachers who put up a great show on the pulpit;*

Indulge in different kinds of activity in privacy. [Publisher]

and preoccupations and displaces them with the result that his heart becomes disgusted with such deeds.

A third evil condition which still afflicts the believer and which is dearer to him than the second, is his natural love of wealth, which he considers the support and comfort of his life and which he conceives as having been achieved through his own effort and striving. For this reason, he finds it very difficult and bitter to part from his wealth in the cause of God.

When Divine favour desires to rescue him from this tremendous involvement, he is given knowledge of the providence of God and the seed of trust in God is sown in his heart. This is supplemented by the awe of the Divine, and these two manifestations of beauty and glory take possession of his heart; in consequence the love of wealth departs from his heart and the seed of the love of the Bestower of wealth is sown in its place. Thereby his faith is further strengthened beyond the degree of faith which he enjoyed in the previous stages, inasmuch as at this stage he not only discards all things vain, but also gives up the wealth on which he thinks his present life depends. If his faith had not been strengthened with the support of trust in God, and his eyes had not been directed towards the True Providence, he could not have been cured of the malady of miserliness. Thus this power of faith not only rescues him from indulgence in all vanity, but also creates a strong faith in the providence of God and illumines the heart with the light of trust in God. He can now spend his wealth, of which he had been enamoured, very easily and cheerfully in the cause of God, and the weakness which results from the despair of miserliness is totally replaced by eager hope in God Almighty; and the love of wealth is overcome by the love

of the Bestower of wealth.

This is followed by the fourth condition which is so dearly loved by *Nafs-e-Ammārah* [the self that incites to evil] and which is much worse than the third condition in which only wealth had to be discarded. In this condition, the unlawful passions of the ego have to be eschewed. The sacrifice of wealth is naturally easier for a person than the discarding of his carnal passions. Therefore this condition is more terrible and dangerous than the previous one. Witness the verse:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَمْتُ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ⁷⁴

This means that carnal passion is so fierce an urge that its restraint needs a strong sign. Thus it is obvious that the power of faith in the fourth stage is much stronger than it is in the third stage, and the manifestation of Divine grandeur, awe and power is also greater. At this stage it is also necessary that the prohibited pleasure should be substituted by a spiritual pleasure. As strong faith in the providence of God Almighty is needed to cure miserliness, and a strong feeling of trust is required when the pocket is empty so that miserliness may be repelled and hope may be fixed on the opening of hidden sources, in the same way, for deliverance from carnal passions and the extinguishing of the fire of lust, it is necessary to have strong faith in the fire which affects both body and soul with severe torment. Also needed is a taste of the spiritual delight which renders these murky pleasures unattractive and dispensable.

⁷⁴ ‘And she made up her mind with regard to him, and he made up his mind with regard to her. If he had not seen a manifest sign of his Lord, *he could not have shown such determination.*’—Yūsuf, 12:25

A person who is in the grip of carnal passion is, as it were, caught in the mouth of a most poisonous serpent. Thus, as the malady of miserliness is graver than the malady of indulgence in vain pursuits, in the same way being caught in the grip of carnal passions is graver than the malady of miserliness, and is a severer calamity than all other calamities, and needs the special mercy of God Almighty to be delivered from it. When God Almighty designs to deliver someone from this calamity, He visits him with such a manifestation of His grandeur, awe and power, as grinds down all carnal passions and invests his heart with eagerness for His own love along with a manifestation of beauty. Just as a suckling baby, on being weaned, passes a restless night or two, and soon forgets its mother's milk and turns away from suckling even if the mother presents her breast to him, in the same way, a righteous one is disgusted with carnal passions when he is weaned away from the milk of desire and is granted spiritual nourishment in its place.

This is followed by the fifth condition, the disorders of which are dearly loved by the self that incites to evil. At this stage only one struggle is left and the time approaches near when the angels of God would conquer the whole territory of the ego and would bring it under their complete control, and, disrupting the whole system of the ego, would ruin the territory of carnal faculties and humiliate its chieftains and destroy their kingdom. For that is what happens when a kingdom is destroyed, as it is said:

إِنَّ الْمُلُوكَ إِذَا دَخَلُوا قَرْيَةً أَفْسَدُوهَا وَجَعَلُوا
أَعْرَظَ أَهْلِهَا أُذُنًا ۖ وَكَذَلِكَ يَفْعَلُونَ ٧٥

⁷⁵ 'Surely, kings, when they enter a country, despoil it, and turn the

This is the last trial for a believer and is the last struggle with which all stages of his journey come to an end. His progress, through his effort and striving, arrives at its climax and human effort completes its operation up to its last limit. Thereafter, there is only bounty and grace, which is described as a new creation. This fifth condition is even more difficult than the fourth. In the fourth condition the believer has to discard unlawful passions but in the fifth condition he has to surrender his self altogether and to restore it to God Almighty as a trust which had been committed to his care. Devoting himself wholly to the work of God, he should make his ego serve on His behalf, be determined to spend it in the cause of Allah, and strive to negate his self altogether, for, as long as the self persists, sinful tendencies also continue—a condition which is inconsistent with righteousness. Besides, so long as the self persists, it is not possible for man to tread along the finer paths of righteousness or to discharge fully the trusts and covenants of God and His creatures. But as miserliness cannot be discarded without trust in God and faith in His providence, and deliverance cannot be achieved from illicit passions without the supremacy of Divine awe and grandeur and the substitution of spiritual delights, in the same way this grand rank where the self is discarded and all trust restored to God Almighty, cannot be attained until a fierce wind of the love of God begins to blow and renders a person madly devoted to the cause of Allah. These are, in truth, the pre-occupations of those who are inebriated with the love of God. These are not the pursuits of the worldly wise.

highest of its people into the lowest. And thus will they do.’—
Al-Naml, 27:35 [Publisher]

آسمان بارامانت نتوانست کشید
قرعه فال بنام من دیوانه زدند⁷⁶

Almighty Allah points towards this, saying:

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا
وَآشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا⁷⁷ ○

‘We presented Our trust, which must be rendered back to Us, to all those who dwell in the earth and in heaven but all of them refused to accept it, out of apprehension lest a default should ensue, but man accepted this trust as he was *zalūm* [firm] and *jahūl* [oblivious of consequences].’

The two terms (*zalūm* and *jahūl*) are used for man as a compliment and not in a derogatory sense. They signify that man had been endowed with the capacity of being harsh upon his own self for the sake of God and could incline towards Him and be oblivious of his own being. Therefore, he accepted the responsibility of treating his entire being as a trust to be expended in His cause.

The requirement laid down for the fifth stage in the verse is:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ⁷⁸ ○

This means that: ‘The believers are those who are watchful of their trusts and covenants.’ That is to say, in discharging their trusts and covenants they spare no effort in exercising righteousness and watchfulness.

This is an indication that man and all his faculties, the

⁷⁶ *The heavens could not bear the burden of the trust;
It fell to my lot to carry it, for I cared not of the consequences.*

[Publisher]

⁷⁷ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:73 [Publisher]

⁷⁸ Al-Mu'minūn, 23:9 [Publisher]

vision of his eyes, the hearing of his ears, the speech of his tongue, and the strength of his hands and feet are all but a trust committed to him by God Almighty, and He can take them back whenever He so wills. Being watchful of these trusts means devoting all the faculties of the spirit and the body to the service of God Almighty while observing all the requirements of righteousness as if they all belong not to man but to God and their movement and operation is not directed by his will but by the will of God. One should have no design of one's own, and only God's will should work through all his faculties. His self in the hands of God should be like a corpse in the hands of the living. His own will should be excluded and the complete control of God Almighty should be established over his being, so much so, that by Him should he see, and by Him should he hear, and by Him should he speak, and by Him should he move or remain passive. The minutest impurities of the ego, which cannot be observed even through a microscope, should be removed, leaving only the pure spirit. In short, the guardianship of God should envelop him and should isolate him from his own being. He should cease to direct his being and all direction should come from God. His personal desires should be wiped out and should be replaced by Divine designs. The previous governance of his being should be totally displaced by another. The habitation of the ego should be destroyed and the camp of the Divine should be established in its place. Divine awe and power should uproot all the plants that were watered from the foul spring of the ego, and replant them in the pure soil of the pleasure of God. All his desires and designs should be subordinated to God, and all the structures of the self that incites to evil should be demolished and laid in the dust, and a

palace of purity and holiness should be erected in the heart which should become the habitation of the Lord of Honour. Only then could it be said that a person has restored those trusts that the Bountiful has committed to him, and has fulfilled the purpose of the verse:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِأَمْتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ٧٩

At this stage a framework is prepared and the spirit of Divine manifestation, which means the personal love of the Divine, enters into the believer together with the Holy Spirit and bestows a new life and a new power upon him. All this happens under the influence of the spirit which, at this stage, establishes a relationship with the believer but does not yet take up its abode in his heart.

This is followed by the sixth spiritual stage in which the personal love of the believer reaches its climax and draws to itself the personal love of Allah the Exalted. Thereupon the personal love of God Almighty enters into the believer and envelops him, in consequence of which he is granted a new and extraordinary power. That power generates such life in his faith as a soul creates in the lifeless body. All faculties are illumined by it, and the believer is so inspired by the Holy Spirit, that he is given access to matters and to knowledge that are above normal human conception. At this stage the believer, having traversed all stages of the progress of faith, is designated in heaven as the vicegerent of God, on account of the excellences with which he is invested and which partake of Divine qualities.

When a person stands before a mirror, all his features are

⁷⁹ Ibid.

reflected in it; similarly, a believer who completely discards his ego so that no part of his own being survives, becomes like a mirror and all the features and qualities of the Divine are reflected in him. It can be said that the mirror, which reflects all the features of the one standing before it, becomes his vicegerent; in the same way a believer, by reflecting Divine qualities, becomes a vicegerent of God and reflects Divine features. As God is Hidden beyond hidden and is transcendent in His Being, in the same way, a perfect believer becomes hidden and transcendent in his being. The world cannot appreciate his reality as he is placed far away from the sphere of the world. It is a wonderful thing that after this holy change in the perfect believer, when he loses his self altogether for the sake of God and emerges in a new garment of holiness, God, Who is Unchangeable and Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting, too appears to him in a new guise. This does not mean that any change takes place in the eternal attributes of the Divine. He is eternally unchangeable, but there is a new Divine manifestation for the perfect believer.

When the believer brings about a change in himself, a change manifests itself in the Divine, the nature of which we cannot fathom. This happens in such a manner that God's unchangeable Being is not affected by the dust of events. He remains unchangeable as ever.

It is a change of the type as has been mentioned, that when a believer moves towards God Almighty, the Almighty moves much more swiftly towards him, though it is obvious that as the Divine is not subject to change, He is also not subject to movement. All these expressions are metaphorical and the need for their use arises because experience testifies that as a believer assumes a new

being by discarding his ego in the cause of God, God also assumes a new aspect vis-à-vis the believer, and deals with him in an exclusive manner. God reveals to him of His kingdom and mysteries that which He does not reveal to others, and displays for his sake that which He does not display for the sake of others. He helps and succours him in a manner that causes people to marvel. He manifests extraordinary happenings for such a person, and works miracles in his support and establishes his supremacy from every point of view. He invests him with a strange kind of magnetism, whereby a whole world is drawn to him and only those remain unaffected who are eternally unfortunate.

All this shows that when a true believer carries out a holy change in himself, God Almighty also appears to him with a new kind of manifestation. This is proof that God has created man for Himself, and when man turns towards God Almighty, from that very moment God turns towards him and becomes his Guardian, his Providence, his Supporter, and his Helper. If the whole world were to be on one side and a true believer on the other, it is the believer who would stand supreme, because God is true in His love and always fulfils His promises. He does not let one who becomes His to be destroyed. Such a believer when thrown into the fire finds himself in a garden; and when pushed into a whirlpool emerges in a beautiful orchard. His enemies design stratagems against him to destroy him, but God frustrates all their plans and projects, for He is with him at every step. In the end, those who seek to humiliate him die in disgrace and end in failure, but he who becomes God's with his whole heart and soul and determination, never dies without realizing his desires. His life is blessed and is prolonged till he achieves

his purpose. All blessings are by virtue of sincerity and all sincerity is in seeking the pleasure of God, and all seeking of God's pleasure ensues from discarding one's own pleasure. This is the death which is followed by life. Blessed is he who partakes of this life.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 230-243]

Excellences of the Men of God

The excellences of the men of God who have a relationship of love and friendship with Him are not confined to prophecies alone. Verities are disclosed to them and they are granted spiritual comprehension. The wonders and mysteries of the Shariah and proofs of the truth of Islām are revealed to them. The inner meanings of the Holy Qur'ān and the fine points of the Word of God are miraculously conveyed to them. They become heirs to miraculous wonders and heavenly knowledge both of which are bestowed directly upon those whom God loves. They are favoured with special love and are invested with devotion and sincerity like Abraham^{as}. The Holy Spirit is reflected in their hearts. They become God's and God becomes theirs. Their prayers bring about extraordinary results. God's jealousy is roused in their support. They are blessed with victory over their opponents in every field. Their countenances shine with the light of Divine love. God's mercy comes down upon their dwellings like rain. Like a beloved child, they rest in the lap of God. God displays greater wrath in their support than a wild tigress whose young is threatened. They are protected against sin, attacks of the enemies, and errors of teaching. They are the kings of heaven. God hears their supplications in a wonderful manner, so much so that kings have recourse to them. The Lord of Glory resides in their hearts. They are invested with a Divine prestige and their

countenances display royal self-sufficiency. They consider the world and its inhabitants to be less than a dead insect. They know only the One and melt under His fear every moment. The world falls at their feet, and it is as if God manifests Himself in human form. They are the light of the world and the pillar of this mortal universe. They are the princes of true peace and they are the sun that dispels darkness. They are hidden beyond hidden and no one truly recognizes them, except God, and no one truly recognizes God except themselves. They are not God but it cannot be said that they are distinct from God. They are not immortal but it cannot be said that they die. Can a wicked person, whose heart and thoughts and life are foul, ever resemble them? Certainly not, except for such resemblance as a shining pebble may sometimes have with a diamond.

When men of God appear in the world, a type of spirituality descends from heaven on account of the blessings that they enjoy and all temperaments are activated, and those whose hearts and minds have affinity with true dreams begins to experience such dreams and visions, as when rain brings down water from the sky the subsoil water also rises, and every kind of vegetation begin to sprout. On the contrary, if rain is held back over a period of time, the water in the wells also dries up. Thus the men of God are in fact heavenly water and with their coming the waters of the earth also swell.

[Toḥfah-e-Golarhviyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 170-172]

Comprehension of the Divine

The fifth excellent element of *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* is that it comprises the complete and perfect teaching which is needed by a seeker after truth and which constitutes a

perfect code of conduct for progress towards nearness to God and comprehension of the Divine. Such progress begins from the point when the seeker, purely for the sake of God, imposing a death upon his ego and submitting to hardship and pain, discards all those desires of the flesh which constitute a barrier between him and his Master. Such desires turn his face away from God, directing it towards personal enjoyments, physical emotions, habits, thoughts, designs, other creatures and involve him in their fears and hopes. The average degree of progress is that all the effort that has to be made for the suppression of the self and all the pain that has to be endured in discarding familiar habits should appear as bounties, and labour should be perceived as delight and pain should be felt as comfort, and constraint should be appreciated as cheerfulness. The higher grade of progress is that the seeker should cultivate such union, love, and accord with God and His will and designs that his self ceases to have an identity and influence of its own. The Being and attributes of God should be reflected in the mirror of his own being without any trace of darkness or suspicion through perfect surrender, which should create the utmost inconsistency between the seeker and his personal desires so that the reflection of the Being and attributes of the Divine should become clearly visible. In this statement there is not a single word that endorses the false theories of *Wujūdīs*⁸⁰, or of the Vedāntists⁸¹, because these people do not recognize the essential and eternal distinction between the Creator and His creation.

⁸⁰ Those who believe that God and the material world are one and the same thing. [Publisher]

⁸¹ Believers in the Vedic doctrine of the eternity of souls. [Publisher]

They have been grievously misled by their doubtful visions which are often experienced in a condition of imperfect progress, or result from practices which induce a type of insanity, or those who, in a condition in which they are not in full possession of their senses, overlook the difference that subsists between the Divine and the human spirit in respect of powers, faculties, qualities and holiness. It is obvious that the Almighty Whose eternal knowledge comprehends the smallest particle and to Whom no defect or default can be attributed and Who is free from every type of ignorance, stain, weakness, grief, sorrow, pain and commitment, cannot in essence be the same as one who is subject to all these deficiencies. Can man, who for his spiritual progress is subject to many contingencies which have no limit, be the same or identical with that Perfect Being Who is subject to no contingency? Can he who is mortal and whose soul suffers from the obvious deficiencies of creation, with all his stains and weaknesses and impurities and defects and shortcomings, be the equal of the Lord of glorious attributes Who is eternally perfect on account of holy excellences and qualities?

سُبْحَنَهُ وَتَعَالَى عَمَّا يُصِفُونَ⁸²

What we mean by this third stage of progress is that in that stage the seeker surrenders himself so completely to the love of God and that Perfect Being approaches so close to him with all His perfect attributes, that the manifestations of Divinity overcome his personal desires to such a degree that he develops a complete dissociation

⁸² 'Holy is He and exalted *far* above what they attribute to Him.'—Al-An'ām, 6:101 [Publisher]

from and enmity with his personal emotions as well as with everyone who is subject to such emotions.

The difference between this stage and the second stage is that though in the second stage also complete accord is established between the will of the seeker and the will of God and the pain that proceeds from God is felt as a bounty, yet his relationship with God is not such as to charge him with personal enmity towards everything beside God, so that the love of God should not merely be the goal of the heart but should become its characteristic. In short, in the second stage accord with God and opposition to all beside Him is the goal of the seeker and he finds pleasure in the achievement of that goal, but in the third stage of progress these two become an integral part of his being from which he cannot depart under any circumstances, because it is not possible for something to be separated from itself. On the contrary such departure is possible in the second stage. So long as the sainthood of a seeker does not arrive at the third stage it is not permanent and is not secure against peril, the reason being that so long as the love of God and opposition to all beside Him does not become characteristic of a person, some traces of wrong linger in him because he has still not fully discharged his obligations to Providence and falls short of perfect *liqā'*. But when the love of God and accord with His will saturate his being, so much so that God becomes his ears with which he hears, and becomes his eyes with which he sees, and becomes his hands with which he grips, and becomes his feet with which he walks, then there is left in him not a trace of wrong and he becomes secure against every hazard. This stage is indicated in the verse:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَلَمْ يَلْبِسُوا إِيمَانَهُمْ بِظُلْمٍ

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمُ الْآمَنُ وَهُمْ مُتَّقُونَ⁸³

It should be realized that these three grades of progress which are the root of all knowledge and comprehension, and indeed are the essence of faith, are set out in the *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* beautifully and in the most orderly manner. The first stage of progress which is the preliminary step towards nearness to God has been inculcated in the verse:

إِٰهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ⁸⁴

To abandon every kind of misguidance and to turn wholly to God by adopting the straight path is to climb the steep hill which has been described as *fanā*, inasmuch as to discard at one stroke all familiar ways and habits and to abandon suddenly all personal desires to which one has been subject all one's life and to turn straight towards God, away from all considerations of repute and honour and self-esteem and showing off, deeming everything beside Allah as non-existent, is an enterprise that amounts to death. Such a death is the source of spiritual birth. Until a grain is buried in the earth and gives up its shape, it is impossible for a new grain to come into being. In the same way the body of spiritual birth is created from the death which is *fanā*. As the ego is defeated and its operation and will and its turning towards creatures are progressively obliterated, so do the limbs of spiritual birth go on being fashioned until, when complete annihilation of self is achieved, he is given the robe of the sec-

⁸³ 'Those who believe and mix not up their belief with injustice; it is they who shall have peace and who are rightly guided.'—Al-An'ām, 6:83 [Publisher]

⁸⁴ 'Guide us in the straight path.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6 [Publisher]

ond being and then comes the time of:

ثُمَّ أَنشَأْنَاهُ خَلْقًا آخَرَ⁸⁵

As this complete effacement is not possible without the help and the special attention of the All-Powerful, therefore this supplication has been taught:

لَا هُدًى لَّنَا إِلَّا الصِّرَاطُ الْمُسْتَقِيمُ⁸⁶

which means ‘Lord! establish us along the straight path and deliver us from every type of misguidance.’

This steadfastness and treading along the straight path, which we are commanded to seek, is a hard enterprise and at first it appears to the seeker like the attack of a lion that must prove fatal. But if the seeker is steadfast and accepts this death, there is no death for him after that. God is too Noble to confront him again with the blazing fires of hell. In short this perfect steadfastness is the *fanā* [death] which completely demolishes the whole system of the being of a servant of God. He has to withdraw suddenly and totally from every type of desire, lust, design and selfish pursuit. This is the stage where human effort and human striving are in the forefront and all the labours of the saints and the seekers arrive at their climax. Thereafter follow heavenly bounties in which no human effort is involved and God Himself provides a hidden chariot and heavenly charger for viewing the heavenly wonders.

The second step in the progress towards nearness of God is indicated in the verse:

⁸⁵ ‘Then we developed it into another creation.’—Al-Mu’minūn 23:15 [Publisher]

⁸⁶ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6 [Publisher]

صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ⁸⁷

‘Guide us along the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favours.’

It should be remembered that those who are the recipients of the overt and covert bounties of God are not exempt from suffering. Indeed they are afflicted with such calamities and torments that would have destroyed altogether the faith of another. They are described as the recipients of Divine favours because on account of their overwhelming love for God they view calamities also as bounties and derive pleasure from everything that they experience at the hand of the True Beloved, whether of pain or of comfort. Thus this is the second stage of progress towards nearness in which everything that proceeds from the Beloved appears a bounty and is a source of delight. This condition results from perfect love for and sincere relationship with the Beloved. It is a special gift which has nothing to do with design and planning. It is a pure Divine favour and when it is received the seeker is relieved of all burdens and every pain is perceived as a favour, and elicits no complaint or grievance. This is a condition of revival after death, because in this condition he encounters favours from every direction and is, therefore, appropriately described as one who is the recipient of favours. This condition is also described as *baqā*, inasmuch as in this condition the seeker feels as if he has been revived after death and perceives great cheerfulness and is relieved of all the constraints of humanness and experiences the nurturing lights of the Divine descending upon him as bounties. At this stage, the door

⁸⁷ Al-Fātiḥah 1:7 [Publisher]

of every favour is opened to him and Divine favours proceed towards him in full force. This stage is also called experience of God, inasmuch as in this stage the wonders of Providence are revealed to the seeker and he experiences such Divine favours as are hidden from others. He is favoured with true visions and is honoured with the words of God and is informed of the delicate mysteries of the hereafter, and is given a large portion of knowledge and comprehension. In short, he becomes the recipient of so many overt and covert bounties that he arrives at that stage of certainty in which he feels as if he is beholding the True Designer with his eyes. Such perfect knowledge of heavenly mysteries is called experience of God. This is the stage at which a person is granted love of the Divine, but it does not yet become his characteristic.

The third stage of progress, which is the ultimate step in treading the paths of nearness to God has been described in the verse:

عَنِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝⁸⁸

This is the stage when the love of God and the enmity to all beside Him become characteristic of the seeker and dwell in him as his temperament. In this stage the seeker is naturally enamoured of Divine qualities and the personal love of God so grips his heart that any departure therefrom becomes impossible and not to be thought of. If his heart and soul are wrung in the machinery of severe tests and trials, nothing but love for the Divine emerges therefrom. At this stage the seeker experiences delight

⁸⁸ 'Those who have not incurred displeasure, and those who have not gone astray.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

only in the throbbing of his love for the Divine and regards it as the true comfort of his heart. This is the stage when all progress towards nearness to God terminates and the seeker arrives at the climax that has been determined for human nature.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 586-624, footnote 11].

God Almighty is most Benevolent and Merciful. When a person turns to Him with sincerity and devotion He demonstrates even greater sincerity towards him. Such a one never perishes. God Almighty has great qualities of love, loyalty, grace and benevolence, and the power to demonstrate Divine might, but he alone witnesses them fully who is completely lost into His love. Though He is most Benevolent and Merciful yet He is Self-Sufficient and Independent, therefore he alone is blessed with a new life by Him who welcomes death in His cause. He alone is awarded heavenly bounties who discards everything for His sake.

One who establishes a perfect relationship with God resembles a person who perceives the light of fire from afar and then approaches it close and plunges into it till he is completely consumed, and there is nothing left but the fire. In the same way the one who has established a perfect relationship with God Almighty approaches Him until the fire of Divine love envelops him and the flame of light wholly consumes the framework of his ego and takes its place. This is the climax of the blessed love of God. Its principal sign is that it generates Divine qualities in him who experiences it, and he takes on a new life, entirely different from his previous life, which is generated by the burning up of the low attributes of humanness by the flame of light. A piece of iron which is thrown into fire and is wholly possessed by the fire, takes

on the appearance of fire; still we cannot call it fire despite the fiery characteristics it shows. In the same way he who is enveloped from head to foot in the flame of Divine love becomes a demonstrator of Divine manifestation, but it cannot be said that he is God. He is a creature of God who has been enveloped in that fire. After he is completely possessed by that fire he demonstrates a thousand signs of perfect love so that through them he is recognized by a wise seeker after truth. One of those signs is that from time to time God, the Benevolent, causes His eloquent and delicious words to issue from his tongue, which are invested with Divine glory and blessing and the perfect demonstration of the hidden, and are accompanied by a light which indicates that they are a certainty and not a matter of doubt. They possess a Divine brilliance and are free from every impurity. Very often they comprise great prophecies which relate to vast and universal affairs. Those prophecies are matchless in quantity and quality. No one can ever produce their match. They are charged with Divine majesty. Through their perfect power they reveal the countenance of the Divine. They are not like the utterances of soothsayers but carry with them signs of the love and acceptance of their proponent, and are filled with the spirit of Divine support and help. Some of these prophecies are related to himself or to his children, or wives, or relations, or friends, or enemies, and some have a wider scope. To him are revealed matters that are not disclosed to others, and to him are opened the doors of the unseen which are not opened to others. The word of God descends upon him as it descends upon holy Prophets and Messengers of God and is certain and free from doubt. His tongue is so honoured that the words that issue from it cannot be

matched by anyone both with regard to their literary excellence and their meaning. His eye is given a visionary power through which he can see hidden events. Very often written statements are presented before his eyes. He meets the dead as if they were alive. Sometimes he views things from a distance of thousands of miles as if they were lying at his feet.

His ears are also blessed with the faculty of hearing hidden sounds. He can often hear the voice of angels and finds comfort in it at times of disturbance. Even more surprisingly, he can sometimes hear the voice of inanimate objects, vegetables, and animals.

فلسفی کو منکر حقائق است
از حواس انبیاء بیگانه است⁸⁹

In the same way his sense of smell can perceive hidden fragrance. Very often he can smell good news and can perceive the bad odour of disagreeable matters. His heart is endowed with the faculty of intuition. Many things flit across his mind and prove true. Likewise, Satan has no influence over him for Satan is left no part in him. On account of his complete surrender to God, his tongue becomes the tongue of God and his hand becomes the hand of God. Even apart from revelation, whatever issues from

⁸⁹ *The philosopher, who denies the phenomenon of Ḥannānah;**
Is unaware of the senses of the Prophets.

* *Ḥannānah* is the name of a tree trunk against which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) leaned while delivering his sermons in the mosque. Later on, a pulpit was built, and when the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) stood on it to deliver his sermon, *Ḥannānah* started crying and its cries were heard not only by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) but also by his companions. [Publisher]

his tongue is not from him but from God, inasmuch as his own being is wholly consumed and destroyed and he is given a new and holy life which all the time reflects Divine light.

His forehead is blessed with a light which is not granted to any except the lovers of God, and sometimes its brilliance is such that even a non-believer can perceive it, particularly when he is persecuted and turns to God Almighty seeking His help. That time of devoted attention to God is a special hour and Divine light is manifested in his countenance.

His hands, feet and body are invested with a blessing in consequence of which the clothes worn by him become blessed and on some occasions touching them or handling them becomes the cause of the healing of spiritual or physical ills.

In the same way God, the Lord of Honour and Glory, invests his dwelling with a blessing, which safeguards it against calamities. God's angels watch over it.

His city or town is blessed in a special manner. Even the dust over which he treads receives a blessing.

His desires take on the colour of prophecy. When he feels an intense desire for something to eat or drink or wear or behold, that thing becomes available.

His pleasure and displeasure also presage a corresponding happening. When he is greatly pleased with someone, that is an indication of the future rise of that person; and when he is wroth with someone, that indicates the latter's decline and ruin, inasmuch as by virtue of his complete surrender to God he dwells in the mansion of truth and his pleasure and displeasure become the pleasure and displeasure of God, not in consequence of his desire but by

virtue of Divine attention.

In the same way, his supplication and attention are in a different category from those of other people and are charged with special effect. There is no doubt that except in cases of absolute Divine decrees, if his attention is fully devoted towards the removal of a calamity, God Almighty averts it, whether it affects an individual or a group or a country or a sovereign. The secret of it is that such people are totally lost to their own beings; therefore, very often their will coincides with the will of God. Thus when their attention is directed intensely towards the removal of a calamity and is wholly concentrated on God it is the Divine way that in such a situation God hears them and does not reject their supplication, though sometimes their prayer is not heard so that their being the creatures of God may be demonstrated and they may not be deified by the ignorant ones.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 16-20]

3

EFFORT AND NATURAL APTITUDE

There are some people who attain exalted spiritual station without effort and striving on their part. Their very nature is such that without any effort or striving, they love God and come to have such spiritual relationship with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as can never be surpassed. As time passes, their inner fire of love for God continues to grow stronger and with it grows the fire of love for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) In all these matters God becomes their Guardian and Provident. When that fire reaches its climax, they fervently desire that the glory of God be manifested upon the earth, and this becomes their greatest delight and their ultimate purpose. Thereupon God's signs appear for them on the earth. God Almighty does not manifest His grand signs, nor does He convey information of great future events to anyone except those who are wholly lost in His love, and are as desirous of the manifestation of His Unity and Glory as He Himself is. They are unique because special Divine mysteries are revealed to them and the unseen is disclosed to them with the utmost clarity. No one else is honoured in this unique way.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 68]

The Sufis have mentioned two ways of spiritual progress—effort and natural aptitude. Effort is to embark upon the way of Allah and His Messenger out of a wise choice. As God says:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ⁹⁰

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That is: ‘If you wish to become the loved ones of Allah, then follow the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.)’

That perfect guide is the Messenger^{sa} who endured such calamities as have no equal, and did not pass one day in comfort. Only those can be counted his true followers who follow every word and action of his with the utmost effort. God does not love the slothful and those who have no desire to encounter hardship. Such people will only incur the wrath of God Almighty. In order to carry out this Divine commandment of following the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the seeker must first study the whole life of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and then follow in his footsteps. This is the way of a seeker. It is fraught with calamities and hardships; it is only by enduring them that a person becomes a seeker.

The rank of those invested with natural aptitude is higher than that of the other seekers. God Almighty does not treat them as mere seekers but Himself exposes them to calamities and draws them towards Himself through His eternal magnetism. All Prophets were so drawn towards God. When confronted with calamities, the human soul is illumined by undergoing such hardship, just like iron and glass, which, though they have the quality to shine, but become capable of reflection only after being polished to the extent that they begin to reflect the features of anyone who stands before them. Spiritual exertion and toil act like polish. The heart too should be polished until it de-

⁹⁰ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:32 [Publisher]

velops the quality of reflection; which in other words means:

تَخَلَّقُوا بِأَخْلَاقِ اللَّهِ⁹¹

The heart of the seeker is a mirror which is so polished by calamities and hardships that he begins to reflect the qualities of the Prophet^{sa}. This stage is reached when, through striving and repeated efforts at purification, all impurities are washed away. Every believer is in need of such cleansing. No believer will attain salvation without becoming a polished mirror. The seeker carries out this polish himself and endures hardships by virtue of his own pursuits, but the one with a natural aptitude is subjected to hardships. God Himself becomes his Polisher and, polishing him with diverse types of calamities and hardships, bestows upon him the qualities of a mirror. The end result of a seeker and one possessing natural aptitude is the same. Hence, righteousness has two aspects: effort, and natural aptitude.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 29-28]

⁹¹ Acquire the attributes of Allah. [Publisher]

4

THE NEED FOR PROPHETS

God Almighty has bound up belief in His own existence with belief in His Messengers. The reason for this is that man is invested with the capacity of believing in the Unity of God as stone is invested with the capacity of flaring up; and a Messenger is like the flint which elicits the spark from the stone by striking it. It is, therefore, not possible that without the flint, that is to say without a Divine Messenger, the spark of the Unity of God may be ignited in a human heart. It is only a Divine Messenger who brings down *Tauḥīd* [belief in the Unity of God] upon the earth and it is achieved only through him. God is hidden and displays His countenance only through a Messenger.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 131]

Prophets are a Manifestation of Divine Unity

The misconception that belief in the Unity of God is enough for the salvation of man, and that it is not necessary to believe in a Prophet, is utterly absurd. People who entertain such a belief seek to separate the soul from the body. Belief in the Unity of God can only be established through a Prophet, and is not possible without believing in him. If a Prophet, who is the source of belief in God's Unity, is excluded, Divine Unity cannot be upheld. A Prophet alone is the cause and source and father and fountain and perfect manifestation of the belief in the Unity of God. Through him alone can one behold the hidden countenance of God and realize His existence. On

the one hand, the Divine is eminently Self-Sufficient and cares not whether anyone is guided or goes astray; on the other, He desires that He should be known and that His creatures should derive benefit from His eternal mercy. He, therefore, manifests Himself to him whose heart is charged to the highest degree with the natural desire of attaining nearness to the Holy One, and is also filled with utmost sympathy for mankind. God displays to him the light of His being and eternal attributes. In this manner, the person who possesses such superior nature—who, in other words, is called a Prophet—is drawn towards God. On account of the extreme eagerness with which his heart is charged with sympathy for mankind, he desires by his spiritual inclination, supplication and humility, that others too should recognize the God Who has been revealed to him so that they too may attain salvation. He sincerely offers the sacrifice of his own self and, out of the desire that mankind may be revived, strives to the utmost degree and is always ready to suffer many deaths, as is indicated in the verse:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ⁹²

God is Self-Sufficient, and doesn't stand in need of creatures, but in view of the grief, sorrow, torment, humility, extreme devotion, truthfulness and integrity of such a person, God manifests Himself through His signs to the eager hearts of men.

As a result of the earnest supplications of such a person, which create a tumultuous uproar in heaven, Divine signs descend upon the earth like rain and extraordinary

⁹² 'Haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death because they believe not.'—Al-Shu'arā', 26:4 [Publisher]

happenings are witnessed, which reveal the countenance of God and the world bears witness that God exists. Had the Holy Prophet^{sa} not turned to God with so much supplication, entreaty and earnestness, and had he not offered the sacrifice of his self and accepted a hundred deaths at every step, Divine countenance would never have been revealed to the world, because God Almighty, due to His Self-Sufficiency, is completely independent. He says:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ غَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِينَ⁹³
وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا هُدًى وَآمَنُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِمْ يُؤْتِيهِمْ مِنْ حُدُودِ الْمَالِ مَا يُضَاعَفُ لَهُمْ مِنْ حُدُودِ الْمَالِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ⁹⁴

That is: ‘Allah is independent of all the worlds;’ and

‘It is Our eternal law that those who strive after Us and seek Us with the utmost effort, We show them Our way.’

The first and foremost in offering sacrifices in the cause of Allah, are the Prophets. Everyone strives for himself but Prophets strive for others. People sleep, but the Prophets stay awake on their behalf. People laugh and the Prophets weep for them. They willingly bear hardship for the deliverance of mankind. They do this so that God may so manifest Himself that people should be convinced that He exists, and His existence and Unity may be clearly perceived by them and through such perception mankind might attain salvation. Thus the Prophets suffer death out of their sympathy for their enemies. And when their agony reaches its climax and heaven is filled with their tormented supplications, God Almighty exhibits the brightness of His countenance and manifests His

⁹³ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:98 [Publisher]

⁹⁴ Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:70 [Publisher]

existence and His Unity to mankind through powerful signs. Thus there is no doubt that the knowledge of God and of His Unity is gained by man only through a Prophet and cannot be achieved otherwise. The highest example in this regard was set by our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who lifted a whole people out of the filth in which they were steeped, and conveyed them to a garden. He provided excellent spiritual food and drink for those who were on the point of death because of spiritual starvation. He raised them from their animal condition to the condition of man, and then civilized them, and made them perfect, and exhibited so many signs that they were enabled to see God, and brought about such a change in them that they began to shake hands with angels. No other Prophet was able to bring about such a complete change in his people, for their followers did not achieve perfection.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 116-118]

Prophets Demonstrate God's Existence

It should be remembered that it is the Prophets (peace be on them) who demonstrate the existence of God and teach people His Unity. If those holy ones had not appeared, it would have been impossible to discover the straight path with certainty. Though a person of sincere nature, possessing sane reason can, by reflecting on the universe and observing its perfect and well-established order, conclude that there ought to be a Creator of this well-ordered universe, however, there is a world of difference between 'Ought to be' and 'Is'. The Prophets alone (peace be on them) established through thousands of signs and miracles that the Transcendent Being Who comprises all power does in fact exist. Indeed, the degree of comprehension that the need of a Creator may

be perceived by the observation of the universe is also a reflection of the rays of Prophethood. Had there been no Prophets, no one would have achieved this degree of reason. This may be understood through the contemplation that, though there is water below the surface of the earth, the maintenance of that water depends upon the water that descends from the sky. When there is a long drought, the underground water dries up and when rain descends the underground water also begins to well up. In the same way, with the advent of a Prophet, reason—which is sub-surface water—is sharpened and improved; and when over a long period no Prophet is raised the sub-surface water of reason begins to decline and becomes muddled and the worship of idols and all manner of paganism and vice abound. The eye possesses the faculty of sight, yet it needs the light of the sun to be able to see. In the same way, human reason, which resembles the eye, needs the light of the sun of Prophethood. And when that sun disappears reason becomes confused and dark; just as you cannot see with the eye alone, you cannot see without the light of Prophethood.

As the recognition of God always depends upon the recognition of a Prophet, it is not possible to recognize the Unity of God without him. A Prophet is a mirror for the observance of the Divine. God can only be seen through this mirror. When God Almighty designs to reveal Himself to the world, He raises a Prophet, who is a manifestation of Divine powers, and sends down His revelation to him and manifests His Divine powers through him. It is then that the world comes to know that God exists.

Blessings of Obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa}

Know well that Prophets do not appear for mere ostentation or show. If people do not derive any spiritual benefit from them and they do not prove to be a source of grace, it would have to be confessed that their advent is only for show, and that it is without any meaning; but that is not so. Prophets are a source of many blessings and abundant grace. With his coming, a fountain of virtue springs forth. Just as mankind derives benefit from the light of the Sun and its benefit does not stop at any point, in this way, the Sun of the grace and blessing of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) continues to shine and to bestow benefits upon the fortunate ones. That is why God Almighty has said:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ

This means: ‘Tell them, If you want to become the loved ones of Allah, then follow me, Allah will then love you.’

True obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa} makes a person beloved of God, and becomes a means for the forgiveness of sins.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 55]

Belief in God cannot be Perfect without Belief in Prophets

QUESTION: Although we believe that mere verbal profession of *Tauḥīd* [Divine Unity] cannot ensure salvation and that none can attain salvation by departing from obedience to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), yet to dispel any possible doubt, we would like to know the true meanings of the verses cited by

⁹⁵ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:32 [Publisher]

‘Abdul Ḥakīm Khān⁹⁶, for instance:

رَبِّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَى وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ
وَالْيَوْمِ وَالْآخِرَةِ عَمَلٌ صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ⁹⁷

بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ⁹⁸
تَعَالَوْا إِلَىٰ كَلِمَةٍ سَوَاءٍ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَكُمْ أَلَّا نَعْبُدَ إِلَّا اللَّهَ وَلَا نُشْرِكَ بِهِ شَيْئًا
وَلَا يَتَّخِذَ بَعْضُنَا بَعْضًا أَرْبَابًا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ⁹⁹

ANSWER: These verses of the Holy Qur’ān do not mean that salvation can be achieved without believing in the Holy Prophet^{sa}. They lay down that salvation cannot be achieved without believing in God—Who has no associate—and in the Last Day; and that belief in God cannot be perfect without belief in Prophets, inasmuch as Prophets illustrate the attributes of God and the true comprehension of God Almighty, without which belief remains imperfect. For instance, the Divine attributes that He speaks, hears, knows the unseen, has power to show mercy and to inflict punishment, cannot be understood except through a Messenger of God. If these attributes are not demonstrated through testimony, the existence of God is not positively established and belief in God has

⁹⁶ ‘Abdul Ḥakīm Khān was a Muslim, who turned apostate. [Publisher]

⁹⁷ ‘Surely, the believers, and the Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians—whichever party from among them truly believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:63 [Publisher]

⁹⁸ ‘Nay, whoever submits himself completely to Allah, while he is excellent in conduct, shall have his reward with his Lord.’—Al-Baqarah, 2:113 [Publisher]

⁹⁹ ‘Come to a word equal between us and you—that we worship none but Allah, and that we associate no partner with Him, and that some of us take not others for Lords beside Allah.’—Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:65 [Publisher]

no meaning. A person who believes in God must believe in His attributes also, and for such belief he must believe in the Prophets. For instance, God's attribute of speech can only be appreciated by proof of His word and it is only Prophets who furnish proof of His word.

The Holy Qur'ān comprises two types of verses. One type is *Muḥkamāt* [fundamental and explicit], for instance the verse:

لَا الَّذِينَ يَكْفُرُونَ بِاللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ وَيُرِيدُونَ أَنْ يُفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَ اللَّهِ وَرُسُلِهِ
وَيَقُولُوا نُوْحِنُ مِنْ بَعْضِ مَا نَكْفُرُ بِبَعْضٍ ۖ وَنُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ بِمَا نَكْفُرُ بِهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ الضَّالِّينَ ۚ
أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ حَقًّا ۖ وَأَعْتَدْنَا لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَذَابًا مُهِينًا ۝¹⁰⁰

That is: 'There are those who do not want to believe in both Allah and His Messengers and seek to make a distinction between Allah and His Messengers and say: We believe in God, but not in His Messengers; and seek to separate Allah from His Messengers. There are others who believe in Allah but not the Prophets, or they believe in some Prophets but not in others and desire to adopt a position between the two; these indeed are the confirmed disbelievers. We have prepared a humiliating punishment for such disbelievers.'...

The second type of verses are *Mutashābihāt* [allegorical] which have very subtle meanings. Their true meaning is revealed only to those who are firmly grounded in knowledge. Those whose hearts are afflicted with hypocrisy do not care to follow what is *Muḥkamāt* [fundamental] and seek to follow only that which is allegorical. The Word of God is full of *Muḥkamāt* [fundamental] verses, whose meaning is clear, and the ne-

¹⁰⁰ Al-Nisā', 4:151-152 [Publisher]

glect of which occasions great harm. For instance, one who believes in God but does not believe in His Messengers has to repudiate Divine attributes. This is illustrated by the new sect of Brahmus who proclaim that they believe in God but do not believe in the Prophets. They repudiate the Word of God, while it is obvious that if God hears He also speaks. If His speaking is not established, His hearing is also not proved. Thus these people become like atheists by repudiating Divine attributes.

Divine attributes are eternal and ever-lasting. They are demonstrated only by Prophets. The denial of the attributes of God invariably leads to the denial of God's existence. This shows that belief in God necessarily implies belief in the Prophets (peace be on them), without which belief in God is imperfect and incomplete. The fundamental verses not only abound in number, but are also supported by the continuous testimony of the Prophets. Anyone who studies the Holy Qur'ān and the books of other Prophets will find that they insist upon belief in the Messengers of God as much as belief in God Himself. If the allegorical verses are interpreted in a sense which is contrary to the meaning of the fundamental verses, great harm would ensue therefrom and many other verses would have to be rejected. No contradiction is possible in the Word of God; therefore the implicit must be reconciled with the explicit....In the Holy Qur'ān, the word 'Allah' has throughout been used as connoting the Being Who sends Prophets and Messengers and Books, Who is the Creator of heaven and earth and possesses such and such attributes and is One without associate. It is true that those who have had no access to God's word and are utterly unaware of it, will be judged according to

their degree of knowledge, reason and intelligence, but it is not possible that they should achieve the grades and ranks which will be bestowed upon those who follow the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) The blind obviously cannot arrive at the high stations of those who are guided by the light of Prophethood. This is Divine grace which He bestows on whom He wills.

Now, observe the outrage that is committed by Miān ‘Abdul Ḥakīm who disregards hundreds of verses of the Holy Qur’ān which proclaim emphatically that the profession of belief in the Unity of God alone is not enough for the achievement of salvation and that faith in the Holy Prophet^{sa} is also essential; and, like the Jews, he twists the meanings of two or three concise verses and insists upon his own interpretation. Every sensible person can realize that if those verses mean what ‘Abdul Ḥakīm opines, then it is goodbye to Islām and the commandments like prayer and fasting etc., which have been taught by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are rendered vain and meaningless. If it were true that everyone can attain salvation through his fancied version of the Unity of God, then the rejection of Prophets and the repudiation of faith would be no sin and would do no harm. However, there is not a single verse in the Holy Qur’ān which relieves a Muslim from obedience to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Even if these two or three verses which Miān ‘Abdul Ḥakīm relies upon had appeared to him contradictory to hundreds of verses of the contrary import, he should have subordinated them to the large number of other verses, and should not have disregarded the latter and thus advanced towards apostasy. In truth there

is no contradiction in the word of Allah. It is only a case of deficient understanding and murky disposition. We should interpret the Word of God Almighty, as He Himself has interpreted it and should not, like the Jews, place another construction upon it.

It has always been the way of the Divine Word and of His Messengers, that they seek to guide a hardened disbeliever by instructing him that if he believes in God, and loves Him, and accepts Him as One without associate, he will surely attain salvation. The purpose of this is that if such a person would believe truly in God, he would be enabled by God to accept Islām. The Holy Qur'ān, which these people ignore, clearly affirms that true faith in God leads to faith in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and such a person becomes ready to accept Islām. My own method also is that when an Āryā, a Brahmu, a Christian, a Jew, or a Sikh, or any other non-Muslim persists in wrong reasoning, I tell him that such discussion will not help him in any way but that if he sincerely believes in God, He will Himself open the way of salvation to him. But by this I do not at all mean that salvation can be achieved without following the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); what I mean is that if a person believes sincerely in God, God will open his heart to belief in the Holy Prophet^{sa}....

It should be remembered that, in the first place, the true Unity of God cannot be appreciated without following the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) As I have just mentioned, Divine attributes, which cannot be isolated from the Being of God, cannot be observed except through the mirror of the revelation vouchsafed to a Prophet. They are illustrated in practice only by a Prophet. But even if someone should acquire

an imperfect appreciation of them, it would not be altogether free from traces of polytheism till such a one is led by God into Islām by accepting His total obedience. Whatever a believer receives from God Almighty through God's Messenger is a heavenly gift which is not tainted by his own pride and self-esteem, but whatever a person achieves through his own effort is always affected by some taint of polytheism. That is why Messengers have been sent to teach the true Unity of God, and mankind has not been left dependent upon reason alone so that the Unity of God should remain pure and should not be tainted with human conceit. This is why erring philosophers have never been able to grasp the pure Unity of God, inasmuch as they are afflicted with pride, arrogance and conceit, and pure Unity demands the negation of the self. Such negation cannot be effected unless a person sincerely believes that it is a Divine gift in which his effort has no part. For instance, one farmer keeps awake throughout the night and irrigates his field with great hardship, while another one sleeps all night and a cloud arises and rain fills his field with water. Would these two be equal in their gratitude to God? Indeed not. He whose field is irrigated without his labour would be more grateful than the other. That is why the Word of God has repeatedly admonished man to be grateful to God, who sends Messengers to teach him the Unity of God.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 172-179]

Why do Prophets have Needs like other People?

I wish to explain why Prophets feel the need of things like the help of other people. God Almighty has power to safeguard them against all needs. These needs arise so that they might manifest examples of dedication to God, like that of Abū Bakr^{ra}, and faith in the existence of God

Almighty may be generated, and such dedicated people may serve as a sign of God and the world may witness examples of that hidden delight and love for the sake of which a loved and desired thing like wealth can be easily and cheerfully sacrificed. After the sacrifice of wealth and riches, these people are granted the power and courage to complete their dedication to God by sacrificing their very lives for Him. Thus the true purpose of the Prophets, peace be on them, feeling the need of things is that they may inculcate the discarding of desire and love for mortal things and be invested with a delicious faith in the existence of God Almighty and develop the spirit of self sacrifice in the cause of the promotion of the welfare of their fellow beings. This holy group subsists under the care of the Master of the treasures of the heaven and earth and can encounter no real need. Their needs are encountered for the perfection of their teaching and promotion of mankind's faith and high qualities.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, pp. 96-97]

5

PROPHETHOOD IN ISLĀM

Meanings and Significance of the Seal of Prophethood

In Islām, the door to Prophethood which claims to be independent (of the Holy Prophet^{sa}) is closed.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 308]

It should be clearly understood that the door of law-bearing Prophethood is firmly closed after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) There can be no book after the Holy Qur'ān which comprises new commandments or abrogates those contained in it or suspends obedience to it. The authority of the Holy Qur'ān will last to the Day of Judgment.

[Al-Waṣīyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 311, footnote]

It has been revealed to me that the door of independent Prophethood is firmly closed after the Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Now there can arise no independent Prophet, neither old nor new. Our misguided opponents do not consider this door completely closed. According to them there is a window open for the return of the Israelite Prophet, the Messiah.

[Sirāj-e-Munīr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, pp. 5-6]

A Prophet is one who receives revelation from God and is honoured with converse with Him. It is not necessary that he should be the bearer of a new law or should not be the follower of a law-bearing Prophet. Thus no harm is done if a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} is raised as

such a Prophet, particularly when he receives all grace from the Holy Prophet himself (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) What is most harmful is to believe that the followers of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are debarred from enjoying converse with God until the Day of Judgement. That religion does not deserve to be called a religion nor is that Prophet worthy of being called a Prophet, whose followers cannot come near enough to God to be honoured with His word. Accursed and detestable is the religion which teaches that human progress depends only on a few principles which are transmitted from generation to generation, that all revelation is a matter of the past and there can be no further revelation, and that hearing the voice of the Ever-Living and All-Powerful God is to be wholly despaired of.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 306]

In Arabic and Hebrew, the word *Nabī* [Prophet] means one who makes prophecies on the basis of revelation received from God. As the Holy Qur'ān does not close the door of Prophethood whereby a person through obedience to the grace of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) may be granted converse with God and may be informed of hidden matters through Divine revelation, then what is there to stop the appearance of such a Prophet among the Muslims? We do not believe that such Prophethood is barred. Only that Prophethood is barred which is accompanied by the commandments of a new Shariah, or claims to be outside the following of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) But a claim to Prophethood by one whom Divine revelation describes as a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and who is also designated as a Prophet,

is not contrary to the Holy Qur'ān, inasmuch as such Prophethood is a reflection of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and is not independent Prophethood.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 351-352]

Excellence of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

The charge advanced against me and my Jamā'at, that we do not believe in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as the Seal of Prophets, is altogether false. The strength, certainty, comprehension and insight with which we acknowledge and believe in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as the Seal of the Prophets, cannot even be dreamed of by the other Muslims; they do not have the capacity to comprehend the reality and the mystery comprised in the Seal of Prophethood. They have merely heard an expression from their ancestors but they are unaware of its import and do not know what it signifies and what is meant by believing in it. But we believe with full comprehension—and God Almighty knows this well—that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the Seal of the Prophets. God Almighty has disclosed the reality of the Seal of Prophethood in such a manner that we derive special delight from its contemplation which cannot be conceived of by anyone except those who have drunk deep at this fountain.

We can illustrate the Seal of Prophethood by the example of the moon, which begins as a crescent and arrives at its perfection on the fourteenth night when it is called the full moon. In the same manner the excellences of Prophethood reached their climax in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Those who

believe that Prophethood has been closed compulsorily, and that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) should not be regarded as being superior even to the Prophet Jonas have not understood the reality of the Seal of Prophethood and do not have true knowledge of his superiority and excellences. Despite their own ignorance and lack of understanding, they charge us with denying the Seal of Prophethood. What shall I say concerning such invalids and how shall I express my pity for them!

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 342-343]

I wish to reaffirm that the principal connotation of the expression ‘Seal of the Prophets’ is that the qualities of Prophethood beginning with Adam^{as} found perfection in the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) This is the obvious meaning. The other meaning is that the circle of the excellences of Prophethood was completed with the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) It is entirely true that the Holy Qur’ān brought perfection to imperfect teachings, and thereby Prophethood attained perfection and Islām became the manifestation of:

الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ¹⁰¹

These are the signs of Prophethood. There is no need to discuss their reality and inner meanings. The principles are self-evident and clear and are known as established verities. It is not necessary for a believer to get involved in their detailed exposition. All that is needed is faith. The Finality of Prophethood is the sign of the Holy

¹⁰¹ ‘This day have I perfected your religion for you.’—
Al-Mā'idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and it is necessary for every Muslim to believe in it.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 286-287]

The Seal of Prophethood as the Perfect Man

The vision of the Perfect Man, to whom the Holy Qur'ān was revealed, was not limited. His concern and sympathy for all was faultless. His self was imbued with perfect sympathy that transcended the limitations of time and space. That is why he was granted full and complete share of the manifestation of Divine Providence. Thus, he became the Seal of the Prophets. This was not because no one was to be granted any spiritual grace after him, but because no one could achieve any grace without the attestation of his seal, and that the door of converse with God would never be closed to his followers. No other Prophet has been granted this seal; he is the only one through whose seal such Prophethood can be achieved and for which it is necessary that its recipient should be a follower of his. His high resolve and deep sympathy did not desire to leave his followers in a position of disadvantage and did not tolerate that the door of revelation, which is the true basis of complete comprehension, should be closed upon them. He desired that, in order to maintain the sign of the Seal of Prophethood, the grace of revelation should be confined to his followers, and the door of revelation should be closed for those who are not his followers. It was in this sense that God made him the Seal of the Prophets. Thus it has been forever ordained that he who is not his follower, and is not completely devoted to him, can never be the recipient of perfect revelation, inasmuch as independent Prophethood came to an end with him (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) But

Prophethood by way of *zill* [reflection], which is to receive Divine revelation through the grace of Muḥammad^{sa}, shall continue till the Judgement Day, so that the door of spiritual perfection should not be closed on mankind and the sign which the high resolve of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) desired—namely, that the doors of converse with God should remain open and the comprehension of the Divine, which is the basis of salvation, should not become extinct.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 29-30].

The question can be raised that as there have been many Prophets among the followers of Moses^{as}, it therefore follows that the status of Moses^{as} was higher than that of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. The answer is that these Prophets were raised by God independently of Moses^{as}, but there have been thousands of saints through the blessing of following the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and also the one who was both a follower and a Prophet. There is no other instance of such bounteous grace in the case of any other Prophet. Among the followers of Moses^{as}, with the exception of the Prophets, most other people were spiritually imperfect, and the Prophets themselves were raised independently of Moses^{as}. But among Muslims thousands achieved sainthood by following the Holy Prophet^{sa} alone.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 30, footnote]

Prophethood by way of Reflection

When Maulavī Ṣāhibzādah ‘Abdul Laṭīf Ṣāhib came to Qādiān, not only did he have the advantage of listening to detailed reasons in support of my claim, but during the few months that he spent in my company in Qādiān and

during my journey to Jhelum when he was with me, he observed many heavenly signs in my support. By witnessing all these lights and extraordinary events, he was filled with rare certainty and was pulled upward by superior power. On one occasion, I explained a particular point to him which pleased him greatly. The point was that, as the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the like of Moses^{as} and his Khulafā' are the likes of the Prophets of Israel, then why is it that the Promised Messiah has been called a Prophet in the Aḥādīth while all other Khulafā' have not been so named? I told him that as the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the Seal of the Prophets and there was to be no Prophet after him, therefore, if all the Khulafā' had been named Prophets, his being the Seal of the Prophets would have been put in doubt, and if no one of his followers had been designated a Prophet, his being the like of Moses^{as} would have been open to question, inasmuch as the Khulafā' of Moses^{as} were Prophets. Therefore, Divine wisdom determined that a large number of Khulafā' be sent down, but out of regard for the Seal of Prophethood, not be called Prophets, nor be granted the rank of Prophethood, so as to emphasize the Seal of Prophethood. Divine wisdom also determined that the last Khalīfa, i.e., the Promised Messiah, should be designated as a Prophet, so that the two dispensations should be proved as being alike in the matter of Khilāfat. I have pointed out several times that the Prophethood of the Promised Messiah is by way of reflection, inasmuch as he has been designated a Prophet by virtue of his being the perfect reflection of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) In one of my revelations God Almighty has told me:

يَا أَحْمَدُ جُعِلْتَ مُرْسَلًا

‘O Aḥmad, you have been made a Messenger’; i.e., as you were held worthy of the name of Aḥmad, by way of *burūz* [second coming], while your name was Ghulām Aḥmad, in the same way you have been held worthy of the title of a Prophet by way of *burūz*, inasmuch as Aḥmad is the Prophet and Prophethood cannot be separated from him.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādatain, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 20, pp. 45-46]

If anyone should ask how there can be a Prophet among the Muslims when God has put an end to Prophethood, the answer would be that God, the Lord of Honour and Glory, has named me Prophet only as proof of the perfection of the Prophethood of the best of mankind. The perfection of the Holy Prophet^{sa} would be established only by the proof of the perfection of his followers, for, in the absence of such proof, the claim of the perfection of the Holy Prophet^{sa} would not be substantiated in the eyes of the wise. The only meaning of the Seal of Prophethood is that all the excellences of Prophethood achieved their climax in the person of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Of the great excellences of Prophethood, is the perfection of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in respect of the conveyance of spiritual grace to his followers, which cannot be established without its manifestation among them. Besides, I have mentioned several times that in the design of God, Prophethood in my case means only the frequency of converse with God and this concept is accepted by the leaders of the Ahl-e-Sunnah.

Thus the controversy is purely verbal. Therefore, O you who possess wisdom and understanding, do not hasten towards denial. Allah’s curse and the curse of

mankind and of the angels be upon him who makes a claim beyond this even by as much as a particle.

[Al-Istiftā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 637 footnote]

The Divine revelation:

خدا کی فیئنگ اور خدا کی مہر نے کتنا بڑا کام کیا¹⁰²

means that God felt that, because of its widespread corruption, mankind was in need of a grand reformer, so the Seal of God blessed a follower of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with the rank of being a follower on the one hand, and a Prophet on the other. Allah the Exalted, bestowed upon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the Seal for the purpose of conveying spiritual excellence, which had not been bestowed on any other Prophet and that is why he was named the Seal of Prophets. This means that obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa} bestows the excellences of Prophethood and his spiritual attention fashions Prophets. No other Prophet has been granted such spiritual power. This is the meaning of the Ḥadīth:

عَلَمَاءُ أُمَّتِي كَأَنْبِيَاءِ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ

‘The divines from among my people will be like the Prophets of Israel.’

There were many Prophets from among the children of Israel, but their Prophethood was not because of their obedience to Moses^{as}; rather it was a direct bounty from God. That is why they were not designated Prophets in one aspect and the followers of a Prophet in another, but

¹⁰² ‘What a grand task has been accomplished by the ‘feeling’ of God and His Seal.’ Note: This Urdu revelation contains the actual English word ‘feeling’. [Publisher]

were called independent Prophets and the dignity of Prophethood was bestowed directly upon them. Leaving them aside, if we look at the rest of the children of Israel, we observe that they had very little guidance and righteousness. Few *Auliya'ullah* [friends of Allah] appeared among the followers of Moses^{as} and Jesus^{as}. Most of them were disobedient, vicious and worshippers of the world. That is why the Torah and the Gospel make no mention of the evidence of their spiritual influence. The Torah frequently designates the companions of Moses^{as} as disobedient, hard-hearted, sinful and rebellious. The Holy Qur'an mentions that their disobedience had reached such a degree that on the occasion of a battle, their response to Moses^{as} was:

فَاذْهَبْ أَنتَ وَرَبُّكَ فَقَاتِلَا إِنَّا هَاهُنَا قَاعِدُونَ¹⁰³

That is: 'Go thou and thy Lord and fight the enemy; here we shall sit.'

Such was the measure of their disobedience. In contrast, the hearts of the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were so inspired by love of God, and they were so affected by the spiritual attention of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), that they sacrificed themselves in the cause of God like sheep and goats. Can anyone show us followers of any previous Prophet, who demonstrated such sincerity and devotion? We have mentioned the companions of Moses^{as}. Now let us turn to the Jesus' disciples. One of them, Judas Iscariot, betrayed him in return for thirty pieces of silver. Peter, to whom had been committed the keys of heaven, cursed Jesus to his face

¹⁰³ Al-Mā'idah, 5:25 [Publisher]

and the remaining disciples deserted Jesus at the time of his trial. Not one of them remained steadfast. They all turned out to be cowards. In contrast, the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) demonstrated such steadfastness and were so reconciled to death that any mention of their devotion brings tears to one's eyes.

What was it that inspired them with such devotion? Whose hand was it that brought about such a change in them? In their pre-Islamic ignorance, there was no sin and no wrong that they did not commit. On becoming the followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, they were so drawn to God, as if God dwelt within them. I tell you truly that it was the spiritual attention of the Holy Prophet^{sa} that pulled them out of a low life into a holy one. Those who later entered Islām in hosts did not do so under the threat of a sword. They did so in consequence of the sincere supplications and humble and passionate prayers which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) offered in Mecca for thirteen years, so that even the soil of Mecca confessed that it was under the blessed feet of him whose heart proclaimed the Unity of God so passionately that heaven was filled with his cries. God is Self-Sufficient. He does not care whether anyone is rightly guided or goes astray. The light of guidance which was so extraordinarily manifested in Arabia, and then spread to the rest of the world, was a consequence of the heartfelt desire of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Followers of every religion had digressed and strayed away from the spring of *Tauḥīd* [belief in the Unity of God] but it continued to flow in Islām. All these blessings were granted in answer to the supplications of the Holy Prophet (peace and bless-

ings of Allah be upon him) as God Almighty has said:

لَعَلَّكَ بَاخِعٌ نَفْسَكَ أَلَّا يَكُونُوا مُؤْمِنِينَ¹⁰⁴

Meaning that: ‘Will you grieve yourself to death because they did not believe?’

The reason why the followers of previous Prophets did not achieve such a high grade in righteousness was that those Prophets did not have the same degree of concern and anguish for their followers as did the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It is a pity that ignorant Muslims of this age do not appreciate the Holy Prophet^{sa} as he deserves, and therefore they stumble at every step. They interpret the Seal of Prophethood in a manner that is derogatory of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and does not hold him up to praise as if he had no power to bestow spiritual grace upon his followers or to help perfect them spiritually, and had been appointed merely to teach them the law. God Almighty has taught Muslims the prayer:

لَا هُدَىٰ لَنَا الْبَصْرَاطُ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ¹⁰⁵

If the Muslims are not the heirs of the previous Prophets and have no share in the favours that were bestowed upon them, why were they taught this prayer? It is a pity that Muslims, on account of their bigotry and ignorance, do not reflect duly on this verse. They are too eager to see Jesus descend from heaven, while the Holy Qur’ān testifies that he is dead and was buried in Srinagar, Kashmir, as God Almighty has said:

¹⁰⁴ Al-Shu‘arā’, 26:4 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁵ ‘Guide us along the straight path, the path of those upon whom Thou has bestowed Thy favours.’—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

وَأَوَيْنَهُمَا إِلَىٰ رُبُوعٍ ذَاتِ قُرَارٍ وَٰمَجْنِينَ¹⁰⁶

That is: 'We delivered Jesus and his mother from the hands of the Jews and conveyed them to a region of high mountains which was a place of security and was watered with clear springs.'

This was Kashmir. And this is why Mary's tomb is not to be found in Palestine, and the Christians claim that she too disappeared like Jesus. How unjust it is of the ignorant Muslims to believe that the followers of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) are deprived of converse with God while at the same time they repeat the sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that among his people there will be those who will resemble the Prophets of Israel, and there will also be one who will be a Prophet in one aspect and the follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in another. He would be the one who will be called the Promised Messiah.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 99-104, footnote]

I tell you truly that Islām is so patently true that if all the disbelievers of the world were to stand in prayer on one side, and I were to stand alone on the other, in supplication before God for a particular purpose, God will support me, not because I am better than all others, but because I believe sincerely in His Messenger and know that all Prophethood ended with him and that all law is comprised in his law. Yet one type of Prophethood has not ended, that is to say, the Prophethood which is granted in consequence of complete obedience to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

¹⁰⁶ Al-Mu'minūn, 23:51 [Publisher]

and which is illumined by his lamp. This Prophethood has not ended inasmuch as it is a reflection of his Prophethood and is given through him and is his manifestation and receives grace from him. God is the enemy of whoever regards the Holy Qur'ān as abrogated and follows a law opposed to the law of Muḥammad and seeks to put his own law in practice and does not follow the Holy Prophet^{sa} and seeks to set up himself in his place. But God loves him who makes the Holy Qur'ān his code and regards the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as the Seal of the Prophets and knows that he is dependent upon his grace. Such a man becomes the beloved of God Almighty. God's love pulls him towards Him and honours him with His converse and displays signs in his support. When such a person's obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa} arrives at its climax, God bestows a Prophethood upon him which is a reflection of the Prophethood of Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), so that Islām may continue to remain fresh and alive through such people and should remain supreme over its opponents.

A foolish one, who is in truth an enemy of the faith, does not desire that converse with God should continue as a characteristic of Islām. He rather wishes that Islām too should become a dead religion like all the others; but that is not what God desires. In the revelation vouchsafed to me, God Almighty has employed the expression Prophet and Messenger concerning me hundreds of times, but these expressions mean only frequent converse with God which comprises the unseen. Everyone is entitled to use an expression in a particular sense. God too designates frequent experience of converse with Him as Prophethood, meaning that such converse comprises a

great deal of that which is unseen. Accursed is he who claims to be a Prophet, but whose Prophethood is divorced from the grace of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) The Prophethood that has been bestowed on me belongs to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and is not a new Prophethood. Its only purpose is to make manifest to the world the truth of Islām and to display the righteousness of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.)

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 339-341]

I believe truly and completely in God's word:

وَلِكُنْ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ¹⁰⁷

This verse contains a prophecy of which our opponents are not aware: God Almighty affirms in this verse that, after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the door of prophecy has been closed forever and that it is no longer possible that a Hindu or a Jain or a Christian or a nominal Muslim should be able to rightfully assume the title of Prophet. All doors of Prophethood have been closed except that of complete devotion to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. He who approaches God through this door is clothed, by way of reflection, in the same mantle of Prophethood that is the mantle of the Prophethood of Muḥammad. Therefore, his Prophethood is not a cause for jealousy, because he does not claim anything on his own account but acquires everything from the spring of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. He is given the names Muḥammad and Aḥmad in heaven. This means

¹⁰⁷ '....but he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

that the Prophethood of Muḥammad is bestowed on Muḥammad by way of reflection and on none other. The meaning of the verse:

مَا كَانَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِكُمْ وَلَٰكِن رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ¹⁰⁸

is that:

لَيْسَ مُحَمَّدٌ أَبَا أَحَدٍ مِّن رِّجَالِ الدُّنْيَا وَلَكِنَّهُ هُوَ أَبٌ لِّرِجَالِ الْآخِرَةِ
لَأَنَّهُ خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَلَا سَبِيلَ إِلَىٰ فَيُوضِ اللَّهُ مِنْ غَيْرِ تَوْسِطَةٍ¹⁰⁹

In short, my Prophethood and Messengership is because of my being Muḥammad and Aḥmad and not because of my own self, and I have been given this name by virtue of my utter devotion to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Thus there is no contravention of the Seal of Prophethood, but the supposed descent of Jesus from heaven would certainly amount to such contravention.

It should also be remembered that the literal meaning of ‘*Nabī*’ is one who discloses the unseen in consequence of being informed of it by God. Therefore, wherever this connotation is established, the title of Prophet would be justified. A Prophet is necessarily a Messenger, for if he is not a Messenger, he cannot be the recipient of knowledge of the unseen as indicated by the verse:

لَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَىٰ غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِن رَّسُولٍ¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ ‘Muḥammad is not the father of any of your men, but *he is* the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.’—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

¹⁰⁹ ‘Muḥammad is not the father of any man of the world, but he is the father of men of the hereafter because he is Seal of the Prophets, and there is no way of receiving Divine grace except through him.’ [Publisher]

¹¹⁰ ‘He reveals not His secrets to anyone, except to him whom He

If it were held that there could be no Prophet in this connotation after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), it would follow that the Muslims are deprived of converse with the Divine; for he who discloses the unseen on the basis of knowledge bestowed upon him by God, would necessarily be a Prophet within the meaning of the above verse. In the same way, he who is sent by God Almighty must be designated a Messenger. The only distinction is that, after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), there cannot be any Prophet till the end of days who shall be the bearer of a new law, or who would be granted the title of a Prophet without having arrived at such a stage of utter devotion to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) wherein he is named Muḥammad and Aḥmad in heaven;

وَمَنْ ادَّعَىٰ فَكَذَّبْ كَفَرًا¹¹¹

The key to this mystery is that the true connotation of the ‘Seal of the Prophets’ demands that if anyone calls himself a Prophet while there is the slightest distance between him and the Holy Prophet^{sa}, will be guilty of contravening the Seal of Prophethood. But he who is so completely devoted to the Holy Prophet^{sa} that, on account of his complete unity and the absence of any difference between them, he is given his name and reflects, like a bright mirror, the countenance of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, then he would be called a Prophet without contravening the Seal, because he is Muḥammad, though only by way of reflection. Thus, despite the claim of

chooses, namely a Messenger *of His*.’—Al-Jinn, 72:27-28 [Publisher]

¹¹¹ ‘He who falsely claims [to be a Prophet] is an infidel.’ [Publisher]

Prophethood by a person who is designated Muḥammad and Aḥmad, by way of reflection, our lord and master Muḥammad would still be the Seal of the Prophets inasmuch as this second Muḥammad is his reflection and bears his name. But Jesus cannot come without breaking that Seal, since his Prophethood is distinct from the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. If no one can be a Prophet or a Messenger, even by way of reflection, then what is the purpose of the prayer:

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ¹¹²

I do not deny being a Prophet and a Messenger in this connotation. It is for the same reason that the Promised Messiah has been designated a Prophet in *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. If one who is bestowed knowledge of the unseen by God Almighty cannot bear the title of ‘*Nabī*’, how then should he be designated? If you say that such a one should be called Muḥaddath, I would counter that no lexicon attributes to the word ‘*Taḥdīth*’ the meaning ‘disclosure of the unseen’, but Prophethood has this connotation. The word ‘*Nabī*’ [Prophet] is common to Arabic and Hebrew. In Hebrew it is called *Nābī* and is derived from the root *Nābā* meaning to prophesize on the basis of knowledge derived from God. *Nabī* is not necessarily law-bearing. This is a Divine gift which carries with it knowledge of the unseen.

[Eik Ghalaṭī kā Izālah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 18, pp. 207-210]

All doors are closed except the one which has been opened by the Holy Qur’ān. Now there is no need to follow the Prophets and Books of the past, inasmuch as the

¹¹² ‘Guide us in the right path—the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings.’—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

Prophethood of Muḥammad comprises all of them and all ways are closed except the way of this Prophethood. All verities that lead to God are comprised in the Holy Qur'ān. No new verity will be disclosed after the Holy Qur'ān, nor is there any verity which was disclosed before it and is not contained in it. Therefore, all Prophethood is closed with this Prophethood and so it should have been, for everything that has a beginning must have an end. But the Prophethood of Muḥammad is not deficient in bestowing grace. Indeed it possesses this quality in a greater degree than all previous Prophethoods. By following this Prophethood a person easily attains nearness to God. Obedience to it makes one more worthy of the bounty of the love of God, and of converse with Him, than was the case with previous Prophethoods. But a perfect follower of this Prophethood cannot just be called a Prophet, for this would be an offence against the complete and perfect Prophethood of Muḥammad. He can be called a Prophet and the follower of a Prophet at the same time, for this involves no offence against the complete and perfect Prophethood of Muḥammad, but rather adds to its brightness. When converse with the Divine arrives at its climax, both quantitatively and qualitatively, and suffers from no impurity or deficiency and unequivocally comprehends the matters relating to the unseen, it is designated Prophethood. All Prophets are agreed on this.

In short, it was not possible that a people about whom it was said:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ¹¹³

¹¹³ 'You are the best people raised for the benefit of mankind.'—

and who were taught the prayer:

لَهُدًى نَّالِ الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ¹¹⁴

should have been deprived of this high rank and not one of them should have achieved it. In that case, not only would the Ummah have remained inferior and imperfect and like the blind, but also the spiritual grace of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) would have been deemed imperfect and tainted, and the prayer that the Muslims had been taught to repeat in their five daily prayers, would have proved purposeless. On the other hand, if this rank had been bestowed upon a Muslim directly and not through his following the light of the Prophethood of Muḥammad, the significance of the Seal of Prophethood would have been obscured. Therefore, in order to safeguard the Muslims against both these contingencies, God Almighty bestowed the honour of perfect, complete and holy converse with Himself upon some individuals from among the Muslims who had arrived at the climax of devotion to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. No intervening barrier remained and they illustrated in their person the meaning of being followers of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in the true sense of the word, so much so that their own being gave place to the reflection of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in the mirror of their devotion, and they were bestowed complete and perfect converse with God.

In this way, some individuals from among the Muslims were bestowed the title of Prophet, for such a Prophethood is not distinct from the Prophethood of

Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:111 [Publisher]

¹¹⁴ ‘Guide us in the right path—The path of those upon whom Thou has bestowed Thy favours.’—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); but if it is viewed carefully, it is the very Prophethood of Muḥammad manifested in a new aspect. This is the meaning of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) having described the Promised Messiah as:

نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ وَإِمَامُكُمْ مِنْكُمْ

which means that he will be a Prophet but he will also be from the Ummah. No outsider can be admitted to such a rank. Blessed is he who appreciates this point and saves himself from ruin.

[Al-Waṣiyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 311-312]

What God requires of you, in the matter of belief, is that God is One and that Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is His Prophet and the Seal of Prophets and is the greatest of them all. After him there is no Prophet except only one who is reflectively clothed in the mantle of *Muḥammadiyyat*. Inasmuch as a servant cannot be separated from his master, nor is a branch separable from its root, he who is designated Prophet by God on account of his perfect devotion to his master does not contravene the Seal of Prophethood. Just as when you look into a mirror, there are not two of you but only one, although there appear to be two: the real one and the reflection. That is what God designated in the case of the Promised Messiah. This is also the meaning of the saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that the Promised Messiah would be buried with him in the same grave; which means that they would be completely identical.

[Kashf-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 15-16]

Remember, I am not a Messenger or Prophet by virtue of

a new law, a new claim or a new name; but I am a Messenger and Prophet by virtue of perfect reflection. I am the mirror in which the form and the Prophethood of Muḥammad are perfectly reflected. Had I been a claimant of distinct Prophethood, God Almighty would not have named me Muḥammad and Aḥmad and *Mustafā* and *Mujtabā*. Nor would I have been bestowed the title of *Khātām-ul-Auliya'* [Seal of the Elect of God], resembling the title of the Seal of the Prophets. In such a case, I would have been given a separate name. But God Almighty admitted me completely into the being of Muḥammad, so much so that He did not desire that I should have a separate name or a separate tomb, for a reflection cannot be separated from its original. Why did this come about? It came about because God had appointed the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as Seal of Prophets, and, in order to maintain the parallel between the Mosaic dispensation and the Muḥammadi dispensation, it was necessary that the Muḥammadi Messiah should be bestowed the dignity of Prophethood like the Mosaic Messiah, so that the Muḥammadi Prophethood should not be considered deficient in any respect when compared to the Mosaic Prophethood. Therefore, God Almighty created me as a perfect reflection, and invested me with the reflection of Muḥammadi Prophethood, so that in one aspect I should bear the title of *Nabī'ullāh* [Prophet of God], and in another aspect the Seal of Prophethood should be safeguarded.

[Nuzūl-ul-Masīḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp. 381-382, footnote]

Frequent Converse with God—the only Claim of the Promised Messiah

In order to provoke the common people, my opponents allege that I lay claim to Prophethood. This is an utterly

false accusation. I do not claim any Prophethood that is barred by the Holy Qur'ān. All I claim is that in one aspect I am a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and, in another, through the grace of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), I am a Prophet. In my case Prophethood means only that I am frequently honoured with converse with God Almighty. The truth is as the revered reformer of Sarhind has recorded in his Maktūbāt:

Though some individuals from among the Muslims are honoured with converse with the Divine and will continue to be so honoured, yet only he is called a Prophet who is so honoured most frequently and to whom the unseen is frequently disclosed.

There is a prophecy in the Aḥādīth that there will appear among the Muslims one who will be called 'Īsā and Ibn-e-Maryam and will be designated a Prophet, that is to say, he will be so frequently honoured with converse with God and so much of the unseen will be disclosed to him as is not possible in the case of anyone except a Prophet as God Almighty has said:

فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَى مِنْ رَسُولٍ¹¹⁵

This means that: 'God does not grant anyone clear and consistent ascendancy over His domain of the unseen, except him whom He chooses as His Messenger.'

It has been established that the bounty of converse with God and of disclosure of the unseen has been bestowed on me to a degree to which it has not been bestowed on anyone during the last thirteen hundred years. Should anyone challenge this, the onus of proof lies with him.

¹¹⁵ Al-Jinn, 72:27-28 [Publisher]

In short, I alone have been honoured with so great a share of Divine revelation and of knowledge of the unseen as has not been bestowed on any of the *Auliya'* and *Abdāl* and *Aqtāb* among the Muslims before me. For this reason I alone have been bestowed the title of Prophet and no one else has deserved it because it implies frequency of revelation and repeated disclosure of the unseen, a condition which was not fulfilled by any of them.

[*Haqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūhānī Khazā'in*, vol. 22, pp. 406-407]

My critic has further objected that God Almighty has said:

الْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتِمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي¹¹⁶

Therefore no reformer or Prophet is now needed. In so thinking the critic has raised an objection against the Holy Qur'ān itself, inasmuch as the Holy Qur'ān has promised the appointment of successors from among the Muslims and has said that through them faith would be strengthened, doubts would be set at rest and security would be restored after a state of fear. Thus if nothing is permissible after the perfection of the faith, then, according to the critic, the Khilāfat that continued for thirty years after the Holy Prophet^{sa} would also be rendered unnecessary, as the faith had been perfected and nothing more was needed.

The citation of the verse¹¹⁷ الْيَوْمَ اكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ by the critic is out of place. We do not allege that a reformer or a Muḥaddath detracts anything from the faith or adds anything to it. What we say is that when, after the lapse

¹¹⁶ 'This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour upon you.'—*Al-Mā'idah*, 5:4, [Publisher]

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

of time, the holy teaching of the faith is covered with the dust of wrong thinking and the pure countenance of truth becomes hidden, then reformers, Muḥaddathīn and spiritual successors appear to reveal the true and beautiful countenance of the faith.

We do not know whence our poor critic has learnt that reformers and spiritual successors arrive for the purpose of adding to or abrogating the faith. Their purpose is not to abrogate but to display the light and brilliance of the faith. The conception of the critic that there is no such need reveals that he does not have much regard for the faith. He has never reflected on what Islām is, what its progress signifies, how its real progress can be achieved, and who can be considered a true Muslim. That is why he considers it enough that the Holy Qur'ān being available, and there being a plethora of divines, the hearts of most people are automatically drawn to Islām and no reformer is needed. He does not appreciate the fact that reformers and spiritual successors are needed among the Muslims, in the same way as Prophets are needed among other people. It cannot be denied that Moses (peace be upon him) was a Prophet and a Messenger and that the Torah was a complete code for the children of Israel; and just as the Holy Qur'ān contains the verse ¹¹⁸ *الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ* so does the Torah contain verses to the effect that the children of Israel have been given a perfect and glorious Book. The Holy Qur'ān also describes the Torah as such. Yet hundreds of Prophets appeared among the children of Israel after the Torah, who brought no new book and whose function was to pull people who had departed

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

from the teachings of the Torah back to it and to purify the hearts of those who had been afflicted with doubts, atheism and lack of faith. God the Exalted has affirmed in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَتَفَيَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ¹¹⁹

That is: 'We bestowed the Torah upon Moses^{as} and thereafter sent many Messengers in its support and to testify to its truth.'

ثُمَّ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا تَتْرًا¹²⁰

That is: 'Then, We sent Our Messengers one after the other.'

All these verses show that it is the way of Allah that after sending down His Book He sends Prophets in support of it. In support of the Torah sometimes as many as four hundred Prophets were sent at one and the same time; as testified by the Bible.

The reason for sending so many Prophets is that God Almighty has warned emphatically that abiding hell is the punishment for denial of His Book; as is said:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَكَذَّبُوا بِآيَاتِنَا أُولَٰئِكَ أَصْحَابُ النَّارِ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ¹²¹

This means that: 'Those who are disbelievers and reject Our signs are condemned to the fire and shall abide therein forever.'

Thus as the punishment of rejection of a Divine Book is so severe and the phenomenon of Prophethood and divine revelation is so difficult of comprehension, indeed

¹¹⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:88 [Publisher]

¹²⁰ Al-Mu'minūn, 23:45 [Publisher]

¹²¹ Al-Baqarah, 2:40 [Publisher]

God Almighty Himself is so transcendent that unless the human eye is illumined by divine light it is not possible to achieve true and holy comprehension of Him, let alone the comprehension of Prophets and divine books, therefore, the *Raḥmāniyyat* of God demanded that his blind and unseeing creatures should be helped very greatly, and it should not be considered enough that a Messenger and a Book having been sent, thereafter, despite the passage of a long period of time, the disbelievers may be committed to the everlasting torment of hell on account of the denial of such doctrines as later generations can comprehend as merely pure and excellent statements.

It should be clear to a thoughtful person that God, Who is *Raḥmān* [Gracious] and *Raḥīm* [Merciful], cannot, without convincing explanation, prescribe so great a punishment as condemnation to everlasting hell for people of different countries who have heard of the Qur'ān and of the Holy Prophet^{sa} after centuries and who, not being proficient in Arabic, cannot perceive the excellence of the Holy Qur'ān. Nor can human conscience reconcile itself to the fact that a person may be condemned without being convinced that the Holy Qur'ān is the Word of God. That is why God Almighty has promised that He will continue to appoint vicegerents so that they, being invested reflectively with the lights of Prophethood, should demonstrate the excellences of the Holy Qur'ān and its holy blessings to the people and thus make them responsible for believing in it and acting upon it.

It should also be remembered that such exposition has to adopt different forms in every age, and that a reformer is equipped with the faculties, capacities and qualities which are suited to the reform of the mischief which is current in his time. Thus God Almighty will ever con-

tinue to do so, as long as He wills, so that reform and virtue may continue to flourish. These statements are not without proof and are testified by an unbroken series of precedents.

Apart from the Prophets, Messengers and *Muḥaddathīn* who appeared at different times in different countries, if one takes into account only those who appeared in Israel, it would be discovered that in the fourteen centuries between Moses^{as} and Jesus^{as}, thousands of Prophets and *Muḥaddathīn* appeared and occupied themselves diligently in the service of the Torah. The Holy Qur'ān and the Bible both testify to this. Those Prophets brought no new book and taught no new faith. They only served the Torah. They appeared whenever atheism, disbelief, misconduct, and hard-heartedness became prevalent in Israel.

It is a point to ponder that the Law of Moses^{as} was limited in its scope and was not meant for the whole of mankind, nor was it to last forever, yet God Almighty took care to send thousands of Prophets for the revival of that law and those Prophets exhibited such signs as enabled the children of Israel to behold God afresh. Then how can it be that Muslims, who have been designated the best of people, and are attached to the Best of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) be accounted so unfortunate that God Almighty looked at them with mercy only for thirty years and after exhibiting heavenly lights to them during that time, turned His face away from them. Centuries passed after the departure of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and thousands of disorders arose, and great earthquakes were felt, and diverse forms of corruption spread, and a whole world mounted attacks against Islām, and all its blessings and miracles were denied, and

that which was acceptable was declared unacceptable, and yet God Almighty never again looked upon the Muslims nor had mercy on them, nor did He consider that the Muslims were also weak human beings and, like the children of Israel, their plants also were in need of heavenly water. Could the Beneficent God, Who had sent the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to remove all corruption forever, turn away from the Muslims like this? Can we conceive that God Almighty was so merciful towards previous people and, having revealed the Torah, sent thousands of Prophets and *Muḥaddathīn* in support of the Torah and for the repeated revival of the hearts of the children of Israel, but that the Muslims were subject to His wrath and, therefore, after the revelation of the Holy Qur'ān, He forgot them and left them forever to the reasoning and deduction of clerics? God clearly stated concerning Moses^{as}:

وَكَلَّمَ اللَّهُ مُوسَى تَكْلِيمًا¹²²
 رُسُلًا مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ لِئَلَّا يَكُونَ لِلنَّاسِ عَلَى اللَّهِ حُجَّةٌ
 بَعْدَ الرُّسُلِ ۚ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ عَزِيزًا حَكِيمًا¹²³

That is to say: ‘Allah spoke to Moses^{as}’ and ‘sent Messengers bearing glad tidings as well as warnings to help him and to testify to his truth, so that people may not have any excuse after that, and, after witnessing a host of Prophets, should believe in the Torah with all their heart.’

Then He says:

¹²² Al-Nisā', 4:165 [Publisher]

¹²³ Al-Nisā', 4:166 [Publisher]

وَرُسُلًا قَدْ قَصَصْنَاهُمْ عَلَيْكَ مِنْ قَبْلُ وَرُسُلًا لَمْ نَقْصُصْهُمْ عَلَيْكَ¹²⁴

That is: ‘We sent many Messengers before thee, some of whom We have mentioned to thee and some We have not so mentioned.’

But God made no such arrangement for the Muslims and withheld from them the mercy and grace He had bestowed upon the people of Moses^{as}! It is obvious that, with the passage of time, previous miracles and wonders became mere tales. Succeeding generations, finding themselves bereft of all such wonders, begin to entertain doubts about miracles and extraordinary happenings. Having the example of thousands of Prophets of Israel before them, the Muslims would be disheartened and, considering themselves unfortunate, would either envy the children of Israel or would consider the history of Israel also a chain of imaginary tales. It is idle to assert that, as there have been thousands of Prophets and many miracles have been shown in the past, the Muslims were in no need of extraordinary events and wonders and blessings and that is why God Almighty held everything of that kind back from the Muslims. This is the kind of thing that is asserted by those who have no regard for the faith. Man is very weak and always needs strengthening of faith. In this respect no help can be derived from self-conceived arguments. It is necessary to realize afresh that God exists. False belief, which is not effective in restraining a person from misconduct, may however continue to exist as a matter of speculation and form.

Need for Reformers after the Perfection of Faith

It should be remembered that the perfection of faith does

¹²⁴ Al-Nisā’, 4:165 [Publisher]

not dispense with the need of safeguarding it. For instance, if a person builds a house, sets all its rooms in order and fills all the needs relating to its structure, and, after a long time, dust settles on it in because of rains and dust storms, and its beauty is covered up; if, at such a time, a person who inherits this house wishes to undertake its cleaning and whitewashing, would this not be the height of folly to stop him from doing so for the reason that the house had been completed long ago? These people do not reflect that the completion of a structure is one thing and its seasonal cleaning is quite another. It should be remembered that reformers do not add anything to or subtract anything from the faith. They restore to the hearts that which had been lost. To assert that it is not necessary to believe in reformers is disobedience of a Divine command. He has directed:

وَمَنْ كَفَرَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَاسِقُونَ¹²⁵

‘Whoever rejects the Khulafā’, after they have been sent, is indeed from amongst the sinners.’

To summarise, it was necessary that after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) reformers should have appeared among the Muslims at times of disorder and trials, who should have been entrusted with one of the functions of the Prophets, namely that they should call men to the true faith and remove all innovations and exhibit the truth of the faith from every point of view with the help of heavenly light and invite people to truth, love and piety by the force of their example. The reasons for this are:

Firstly, reason affirms that matters relating to God and

¹²⁵ Al-Nūr, 24:56 [Publisher]

the hereafter are very fine and imperceptible. One has to believe in the unseen and the supernatural. No one has ever seen God Almighty or observed heaven and hell, or met the angels. What is more, Divine commandments are opposed to the desires of the ego and restrain from that in which the ego delights. Therefore it is necessary that either the Prophets of God, who bring the law and the Book and possess spiritual power, should live long and continue to bless their followers in each century with their company, and should train them under their own graceful supervision and convey to them the blessing, light and spiritual comprehension which they had done in the early part of their ministry. Or, if that should not be possible, then their spiritual heirs, who are equipped with their high qualities and can set forth the verities and insights comprised in the Divine Book under the guidance of revelation, and can illustrate in practice that which is related to the past and can lead a seeker after truth to certainty, must continue to appear in times of trouble and trials so that man who is afflicted with doubt and forgetfulness should not be deprived of the true grace of the Prophets.

It is obvious that when the time of a Prophet comes to an end, and those who have witnessed his blessings pass away, their experiences become tales in the eyes of the people of the next generation. The moral qualities of the Prophet, his worship, his steadfastness, his devotion, Divine support, extraordinary events, and miracles which testified to his Prophethood and the truth of his claim becomes fictional in the estimation of subsequent generations. Therefore, the freshness of the faith and the eagerness of obedience that are the characteristics of those who are favoured with the company of the Prophet

are not found in those who come after them. It is clear that the kind of sincerity and devotion with which the companions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sacrificed their wealth, lives, and honour in the cause of Islām were not to be found even among the second century Muslims, let alone Muslims of subsequent centuries. Why was this so? It was because the companions, may Allah be pleased with them, had beheld the countenance of the true one, whose love for Allah was so spontaneously testified even by the disbelieving Quraish. These people, observing his daily supplications, his loving prostrations, his condition of complete obedience, the bright signs of perfect love and devotion on his countenance, and the rain of Divine light on his face, were compelled to affirm:

عَشِيقُ مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَى رَبِّهِ

‘Muḥammad has fallen in love with his Lord.’

The companions not only observed the devotion, love and sincerity which surged up in the heart of our lord and master Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) like a raging ocean, they also observed God Almighty’s love for him, in the guise of extraordinary support and help. Then they realized that God exists and their hearts testified that He stood by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) They had witnessed so many Divine wonders and so many heavenly signs that they were left in no doubt about the existence of a Supreme Being Who is God, Who controls everything and for Whom nothing is impossible. That is why they exhibited such devotion and made such sacrifices as are not possible for anyone until all his doubts have been resolved. They realized that to win His pleas-

ure it was necessary to accept Islām and to obey the Holy Prophet^{sa} with complete sincerity. After this absolute certainty, the kind of obedience they exhibited and the feats they performed and the manner in which they laid down their lives at the feet of their Holy Preceptor, were matters which were not possible for anyone who had not witnessed what the companions had witnessed.

Such high qualities cannot be developed and salvation cannot be truly achieved without such means. It is, therefore, necessary that the Beneficent God Who has invited everyone to salvation should make a similar arrangement in every century so that His creatures should not fail in any age to attain the stage of absolute certainty.

Need of the Company of the Righteous

The affirmation that the Holy Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth alone suffice us and that we do not need the company of the righteous is opposed to the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān, as Allah the Exalted has said:

وَكُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ¹²⁶

The truthful are those who have recognized the truth through their spiritual insight and are devoted to it. This high grade of spiritual insight cannot be achieved unless heavenly guidance conveys a seeker to the stage of certainty by experience. In this sense the truly righteous are the Prophets, the Messengers, the Muḥaddathīn and the perfect Auliya' who are guided by heavenly light and who behold God Almighty with the sight of certainty in this very world. The verse that we have just quoted indicates that the world is never left without the truthful, as

¹²⁶ ‘And be with the truthful.’—Al-Taubah, 9:119 [Publisher]

the commandment ¹²⁷ كُونُوا مَعَ الصَّادِقِينَ necessitates the presence of the truthful at all times.

Besides, observation confirms that the learning and knowledge of those who do not seek the company of the righteous does not help to rid them of their physical passions, and that they do not achieve even that minimum status in Islām which generates the certainty of belief that God does indeed exist. They do not believe in the existence of God with the same certainty as they feel with regard to their wealth, which is locked in their boxes, or about the houses which they own. They dread swallowing arsenic, as they are certain that it is a fatal poison, but they do not dread the poison of sin, though they read in the Holy Qur'ān:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَأْتِ رَبَّهُ مُجْرِمًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَى ¹²⁸

The truth is that he who does not recognize God Almighty cannot recognize the Holy Qur'ān. It is true that the Holy Qur'ān has been revealed for guidance, but the guidance of the Qur'ān is bound up with the personality of the one to whom it was revealed or of one who is appointed his substitute by God. Had the Qur'ān alone been enough, God Almighty had the power to have the Qur'ān inscribed on the leaves of trees or could have made it descend from heaven in the form of a book, but this was not what He did. He did not send the Qur'ān into the world till the teacher of the Qur'ān had been sent. You will find that at several places the Holy Qur'ān affirms:

يَعْلَمُهُمُ الْكِتَابُ وَالْحِكْمَةُ ¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ 'Verily, he who comes to his Lord a sinner—for him is hell; he shall neither die therein nor live.'—Ṭā Hā, 20:75 [Publisher]

That is: ‘The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) teaches the Qur’ān and its wisdom to the people.’ At one place it is said:

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ¹³⁰

This means that: ‘The verities and the insights of the Qur’ān are revealed only to the purified.’

Need for Teachers and Fresh Exposition of the Holy Qur’ān

This shows clearly that for the true understanding of the Holy Qur’ān a teacher is needed who is purified by God Almighty Himself. Had a teacher of the Qur’ān not been needed, there would have been no such need from the beginning of time. It is idle to assert that in the beginning a teacher was needed for the exposition of the difficult parts of the Qur’ān, and that exposition having been made, a teacher is no longer needed. Fresh exposition is needed from time to time. The Muslims are confronted with new difficulties in every age. It is true that the Qur’ān comprises all knowledge but not all its knowledge is disclosed at one time. It is revealed as difficulties and problems are encountered. Spiritual teachers, who are the heirs of the Prophets and are reflectively invested with their qualities, are sent to resolve the difficulties that arise in every age. The reformer whose functions closely resemble the functions of a Messenger bears the name of that Messenger in the estimation of Allah.

Teachers are also needed, because some portions of the teaching of the Holy Qur’ān are matters of *ḥāl* as op-

¹²⁹ Al-Jumu‘ah, 62:3 [Publisher]

¹³⁰ Al-Wāqī‘ah, 56:80 [Publisher]

posed to *qāl*.¹³¹ The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who was the first teacher of the Holy Qur'ān and the true heir of its teaching, demonstrated its teachings to his companions by his own practice and example. For instance, the Divine affirmation that He knows the unseen, accepts prayer, has power to do all that He wills, leads His seekers to the true light, sends His revelation to His sincere servants, and causes His spirit to descend upon whomsoever He wills out of His creatures, are all matters that can be understood only through the example of the teacher himself.

It is obvious that the superficial clerics, who are themselves blind, cannot illustrate these teachings. On the contrary, they teach that all these matters have been left behind and can no longer be experienced. Thus they create doubts in the minds of their disciples concerning the greatness of Islām. They teach that Islām is no longer a living faith and there is no way now to discover its true meaning. It is obvious, however, that if God Almighty designs that His creatures should always drink from the spring of the Holy Qur'ān, He would have made provisions for it as He always done. Had the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān been limited, as the teaching of an experienced and right thinking philosopher is limited, and did it not comprise the heavenly teaching which can only be demonstrated by practice, then, God forbid, the revelation of the Qur'ān was needless. But I know that if one were to reflect upon the distinction between the teaching of the Prophets and the teaching of the philosophers, assuming both to be true, the only distinction that would be

¹³¹ *Hāl* here means the practical demonstration of faith, as opposed to *qāl*, which connotes only verbal acceptance. [Publisher]

discovered is that a great portion of the teaching of the Prophets is metaphysical and can only be understood and appreciated through practical demonstration, and can be illustrated only by those who have the personal experience of it....

If Allah the Glorious has so willed that this portion of the teaching of His Book should not be confined to the early ages, then He must have arranged for the teachers of that portion to be available at all times, since the portion of the teaching which relates to personal experience cannot be comprehended except through teachers who have experienced it. Therefore, if after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) teachers who were guided by the reflection of the light of Prophethood had not been available, it would mean that God Almighty, having removed from the world at an early stage those who understood the Holy Qur'ān truly and correctly, deliberately let the Qur'ān become useless. But this would be contrary to His promise:

إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ¹³²

That is: 'It is We Who have sent down the Qur'ān and We shall continue to safeguard it.'

Fulfilling the Need of Safeguarding the Holy Qur'ān

I am unable to understand that if those with complete understanding of the Qur'ān and belief in its certainty through personal experience have all passed away, then how has the Qur'ān been safeguarded? Does safeguarding it mean that the Qur'ān, beautifully inscribed, would be preserved forever locked in safes like treasures that lie

¹³² Al-Hijr, 15:10 [Publisher]

buried under the earth and are of no use to anyone? Can anyone imagine that this is the true meaning of this verse? If so, there is nothing extraordinary about it. Rather, such a claim is laughable and amounts to inviting ridicule from the enemies of Islām. Of what use is the safeguarding which does not serve the true purpose? It is quite possible that a copy of the Torah or the Gospel may be found which has been similarly safeguarded. There are thousands of books, which have continued to exist entirely unaltered and which are for certain the writings of a particular person. There is no particular merit in such preservation, and such safeguarding of the Qur'ān would be of no benefit to the Muslims. It is true that the safeguarding of the text of the Holy Qur'ān is greater than that of all other books and is in itself extraordinary, but we cannot imagine that God Almighty, Who always has a spiritual purpose, meant only the safeguarding of the text of the Holy Qur'ān. The very word *dhikr* [remembrance] clearly indicates that the Holy Qur'ān will be preserved forever as a remembrance, and its true *dhākirin*¹³³ will always be present. This is confirmed by another verse, which says:

بَلْ هُوَ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ فِي صُدُورِ الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْحِكْمَ¹³⁴

‘The Holy Qur'ān is composed of clear signs in the bosoms of those who have been bestowed knowledge.’

This verse clearly means that the believers have been bestowed knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān and they act upon it. As the Qur'ān is preserved in the bosoms of the believers, the verse:

¹³³ Those who learn the Qur'an, act according to it, and recite it to others. [Publisher]

¹³⁴ Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:50, [Publisher]

لَا تَأْتَحُنُ تَرْلَنَا الدُّكْرَ وَرَأْسَهُ لَحْفُظُونَ¹³⁵

means that it would not cease to dwell therein....

Secondly, reason demands that for the teaching and understanding of Divine books, it is necessary that, like the advent of the Prophets, recipients of revelation and persons equipped with spiritual knowledge should also continue to appear from time to time. Similarly, when we study the Qur'ān and deliberate upon it we discover that the availability of spiritual teachers is part of the Divine design. For instance God has said:

وَأَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ¹³⁶

(Part Number 13)

‘That which benefits people endures in the earth.’

The Prophets who strengthen people's faith through miracles, prophecies, verities, insights and the example of their own righteousness, and benefit the seekers after truth, are obviously the greatest benefactors of mankind. And it is also obvious that they do not remain upon the earth for a long time and pass away after a short existence. Yet the purport of this verse cannot be contradictory to this reality. Therefore, with reference to the Prophets, this verse means that they continue their beneficence by way of reflection. God Almighty at the times of need raises a servant of His who becomes their example reflectively and thus continues their spiritual life. It is for this purpose that God has taught the prayer:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ¹³⁷

¹³⁵ ‘Verily, We Ourselves have sent down this Exhortation, and surely We will be its Guardian.’—Al-Hijr, 15:10 [Publisher]

¹³⁶ Al-Ra‘d, 13:18 [Publisher]

‘O Allah, guide us along the straight path, the path of those servants upon whom Thou has bestowed Thy favours....’

Not only has He taught this prayer, but has also promised in another verse:

وَالَّذِينَ جَاءُوا هَذَا مِنْ غَيْرِنَا كَتَبْنَا لَهُمْ سُبُلَنَا ¹³⁸

‘Those who strive in Our path—which is the right path—We will surely guide them along Our ways.’

It is clear that the ways of God Almighty are those that have been disclosed to the Prophets.

[Shahādāt-ul-Qur’ān, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 6, pp.339-352]

Divine Promise of Khilāfat

There are other verses which also indicate that it is God’s design that spiritual teachers, who are the heirs of the Prophets, should always continue to be available. For instance:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ ¹³⁹
وَلَا يَزَالُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا تُصِيبُهُمْ بِمَا صَنَعُوا قَارِعَةٌ أَوْ تَحُلُّ قَرِيبًا مِنْ
دَارِهِمْ حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ وَعْدُ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُخْلِفُ الْمِيعَادَ ¹⁴⁰
وَمَا كُنَّا مُعَذِّبِينَ حَتَّى تَبْعَثَ رَسُولًا ¹⁴¹

Meaning: ‘O True believers among the followers of Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), Allah has promised those among you who believe and act

¹³⁷ Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

¹³⁸ Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:70 [Publisher]

¹³⁹ Al-Nūr, 24:56 [Publisher]

¹⁴⁰ Al-Ra’d, 13:32 [Publisher]

¹⁴¹ Banī Isrā’īl, 17:16 [Publisher]

righteously, that He will surely make them successors in the earth, as He made successors among those who were before them.’

‘Those who disbelieve will continue to be afflicted with a calamity, physical or spiritual, or would descend close to their dwellings till the Divine promise is fulfilled. Surely Allah doeth not contrary to His promise.’

‘And We send not a punishment till after We have raised a Messenger.’

If a person reflects upon these verses he will realize that God Almighty has clearly promised the Muslims a permanent Khilāfat. If this Khilāfat were not permanent there would have been no sense in describing it as resembling the Khilāfat of the Mosaic dispensation....

A Khalīfa is a reflection of a Prophet. As man is mortal, God Almighty designed that Prophets, who are more exalted and honoured than all other beings, should be reflectively preserved forever. For this purpose, God instituted Khilāfat so that the world should at no time be deprived of the blessings of Prophethood. He who limits it to thirty years, foolishly overlooks the true purpose of Khilāfat, and does not realize that God did not design that the blessings of Khilāfat be limited to thirty years after the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and that, thereafter, the world may go to ruin....

There are many other verses in the Holy Qur’ān, which give tidings of a permanent Khilāfat among the Muslims, and there are also several Aḥādīth to the same effect. But what I have said already should suffice for those who accept established verities as great wealth.

There is no worse concept concerning Islām than to say

that it is a dead religion whose blessings were confined only to its beginning. Can the Book that opens the door of perpetual good fortune inculcate so discouraging a doctrine that there is no blessing or Khilāfat in the future and that everything has been confined to the past? True, there will be no independent Prophets among the Muslims. But if there were also to be no Khulafā' to demonstrate the proofs of spiritual life from time to time, that would spell the end of spirituality in Islām....It causes one's heart to tremble to imagine that Islām has now died and that no such people would arise in it, whose spiritual manifestations would be a substitute for miracles and whose inspiration a substitute for revelation, let alone that a Muslim should believe in any such possibility as a doctrine. May God Almighty guide those who are involved in such misguided thinking.

[Shahādat-ul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp.352-356]

6

THE MESSIAH AND HIS SECOND COMING

I solemnly believe that Jesus (peace be upon him) is dead and is in the company of the departed ones. And why should I not believe this, when God Almighty has declared him dead in His Mighty Book, the Holy Qur'ān. There is no mention anywhere in the Qur'ān of his extraordinarily long life or of his second advent. Rather the Holy Qur'ān declares him to be dead and says nothing more. I consider it an utterly false and vain notion that he is alive in his physical body and will appear in this world a second time. I believe this, not only on the basis of the revelations vouchsafed to me, but also because I know that it is opposed to the clear, conclusive and certain testimony of the Holy Qur'ān.

[Āsmānī Faiṣlah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 315]

Popular Beliefs about the Ascension

It is clear that Christians and the bulk of Muslims entertain the belief that Jesus (peace be upon him) ascended bodily to heaven. Both imagine that he is physically alive in heaven and will descend upon the earth sometime in the latter days. But there is one difference between the two doctrines. Christians believe that Jesus^{as} died on the cross, came back to life, then ascended bodily to heaven and took his seat on the right hand of his Father and will descend to the earth to judge mankind in the latter days. They allege that Jesus is the God, the Creator and Master of the world, and that he will descend in glory at the end

of the world to judge mankind. Then all those who have not accepted him or his mother as God will be seized and cast into hell where they will stay weeping and grinding their teeth. Muslims, on the one hand, allege that Jesus^{as} was not crucified and did not die on the cross. He was not even nailed to the cross; rather, when he was apprehended by the Jews, an Angel of God carried him bodily to the second heaven where he abides alongside the Prophet Yaḥyā^{as} or John.¹⁴² Muslims also believe that Jesus^{as} was a revered Prophet of God and was neither God nor the son of God. They believe that he will descend in the latter days leaning upon two angels, near a minaret in Damascus, or at some other place, and that he and the Imam Muḥammad Mahdī, who will have already appeared from among the descendants of Ḥaḍrat Fāṭima, will both join forces to slaughter all those who do not immediately accept Islām. In short, the Muslims who call themselves Ahl-e-Sunnah and also Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, who are commonly known as Wahābīs, say that the real purpose of the second advent of Jesus^{as} is that, like the Mahadev of Hindus, he should destroy the greater part of the world. He will first warn people to become Muslims and if they resist he will put them to the sword....

As regards Christians, the Muslim divines assert that, when Jesus^{as} descends from heaven, he will break all the crosses in the world and will mercilessly drown the whole world in blood.... Though Jesus^{as} will himself be a Mahdī, indeed he will be the principal Mahdī, yet he will not be the Khalīfa because the Khalīfa must be from among the Quraish. Muḥammad Mahdī will be the Khalīfa. According to them, both of them will together

¹⁴² John the Baptist. [Publisher]

fill the earth with human blood and will cause bloodshed unparalleled in the annals of the world. They will start killing as soon as they appear, without any admonition and without manifesting any sign. They allege that Jesus^{as} will be a counsellor or minister of Imam Muḥammad Mahdī who will be the ruler, but Jesus will constantly incite the Mahdī to bloodshed as if to make up for his previous teachings: ‘Resist not evil, and, being smitten on one cheek, turn the other cheek as well.’

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 15, pp. 5-7].

Aḥmadiyyah Belief about the Mahdī

My belief and the belief of the members of my Community is that the bulk of the Aḥādīth concerning the advent of the Mahdī and the Promised Messiah are utterly untrustworthy. These fall into three categories:

- 1) The Aḥādīth which are false and fabricated. They are reported on the authority of people who were considered dishonest and given to falsehood. No sincere Muslim can place any trust in them.
- 2) The Aḥādīth which are considered weak and which are untrustworthy on account of mutual contradictions. They are either not mentioned by the great Imāms of Ḥadīth or have been mentioned as doubtful, and the truth and honesty of their narrators is not certified.
- 3) The Aḥādīth which are true, and are confirmed as such, but have either been already fulfilled or they make no reference to any physical warfare and only predict the coming of the Mahdī who will have no worldly kingdom or Khilāfat and will neither fight nor cause bloodshed. He will have no army but will establish faith in the hearts of the people through his spirituality and inner attention. For instance, there is the Ḥadīth:

لَا مَهْدِيَّ إِلَّا عِيسَى¹⁴³

This is mentioned in the collection of Ibn-e-Mājah, which is known by this very name, and is also comprised in Ḥākim's *Mustadrak*, on the authority of Anas bin Mālīk. This Ḥadīth has been narrated by Muḥammad bin Khālīd Jundī on the authority of Abān bin Ṣāleḥ who related it on the authority of Ḥasan Baṣrī who related it on the authority of Anas bin Mālīk who heard it from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) This Ḥadīth means that there will be no Mahdī except the person who will appear in the spirit of Jesus^{as}, and whose teachings will be like those of Jesus^{as}, because he will not physically resist evil nor fight; he will spread the truth through his holy example and through heavenly signs, and will be both the Promised Messiah and the Mahdī. This Ḥadīth is supported by another Ḥadīth comprised in the collection of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, which says:

يَضَعُ الْحَرْبَ

This means that the Mahdī, whose other name will be the Promised Messiah, will put an end to all religious wars and will direct that there should be no fighting in the cause of religion and that religion should be propagated through the light of the faith, moral miracles and the signs of nearness to God. I, therefore, affirm that he who fights in this age for the sake of religion, or lends support to any such fighter, or—openly or secretly—counsels fighting, or entertains any such designs, is guilty of disobedience to God and the Holy Prophet^{sa} and transgresses the limits, obligations and admonitions which are prescribed by them.

¹⁴³ 'There will be no Mahdī except 'Īsā.'—[Publisher]

...**I am the Promised Messiah** who is Divinely guided, and who follows the morals of the Messiah (peace be on him.) Everyone should judge me with reference to these morals and should purge his heart of all ill will concerning me. A careful consideration of the teaching that I have set forth during the last twenty years, from *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* to *Rāz-e-Ḥaqīqat*, should testify to my inner purity. I can prove that I have spread these books as far as Arabia, Turkey, Syria and Kabul. I utterly repudiate the doctrine that Jesus will descend from heaven to fight the battles of Islām, or that anyone who calls himself Mahdī, and appears from among the descendants of Ḥaḍrat Fāṭima, will be the monarch of the time, and that the two of them will start a reign of bloodshed. God has revealed to me that all these speculations are false. Jesus (peace be on him) died long ago and lies buried in Moḥalla Khānyār in Srinagar, Kashmir. Thus as the descent of the Messiah from heaven is disproved, the appearance of any warrior Mahdī is also falsified. Let him who thirsts for truth accept this.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Mahdī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 429-433]

My statement concerning the Promised Messiah, whose descent from heaven and second advent into the world is awaited, which God Almighty has disclosed to me by His grace and mercy, is that there is no mention in the Holy Qur'ān of the second advent of Jesus. According to the Holy Qur'ān, Jesus has departed from this world forever. Some Aḥādīth, which are replete with metaphors, predict the second advent of Jesus. Their context indicates that they do not predict the second coming of Jesus, son of Mary, but comprise metaphorical statements which mean that in an age that would resemble the age of Jesus, son of Mary, a person will resemble Jesus, son of Mary, in

his temperament, power and function. As Jesus, son of Mary, had revived the religion of Moses^{as} and had set forth afresh the true teaching of the Torah, which the Jews had forgotten, in the same way this second Messiah would revive the faith of the Prophet who was like Moses^{as} and was the Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) This Messiah of the Prophet who was the like of Moses^{as} will completely resemble the Messiah of Moses^{as} in the events of his life and in all other consequences that his people will experience on account of their obedience to him or their denial of him. God Almighty has revealed to me that I am that Promised Messiah.

Contradictions in the Popular Beliefs

According to their old ideas which have taken firm root in their hearts, the Muslims' claim that Jesus, son of Mary, will descend from heaven near the eastern minaret of Damascus with his hands resting on the shoulders of two angels. Some of them say that he will descend on the minaret with the help of a ladder which the Muslims will provide for him, and the angels will then depart. He will be well dressed—he will not be naked—and will meet the Mahdī in that condition. His age will be the same as when he ascended to heaven, that is thirty-two or thirty-three years. Passage of years and months will not have affected his age or physique; nor will his hair and nails have grown; they will only become subject to change after his descent. He will not engage in fighting, but the disbelievers will die by the power of his breath alone, which, instead of reviving the dead as it formerly did, will now cause the living to die.

Here the clerics contradict themselves and assert that he

will wage wars, and the one-eyed Antichrist will die at his hands. The Jews will also be killed by his command. They assert that he will be the same Jesus, son of Mary, who was a Prophet of God and who was bestowed the Gospel through Gabriel, and yet they allege that on his descent upon earth he will have lost his status of Prophethood and will only be a follower of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and will be bound by the law of the Holy Qur'ān, like the Muslims, and will join them in their prayers. Some say that he will be a follower of the great Imam Abū Ḥanīfa, but it is not specified which of the four Sufi orders, Qādrī, Chishtī, Suharwardī or Naqshbandī he will identify himself with. In short, they begin with describing him as a Prophet and then reduce him to a degree that no sensible person can ever contemplate. Then, converting his functions from their metaphorical description into physical activities, they allege that he will break crosses and slaughter swine. They do not explain what he will gain by breaking crosses. Even if he broke one or two million crosses, would the Christians, who are devoted to the worship of the cross, not make new ones in place of the broken ones? If the slaughtering of swine is also to be taken literally, will the principal occupation of the Messiah be that of hunting swine with a pack of dogs? If that is so, it will be a great day for Sikhs and some nomadic tribes like the Chamārs, Sānsīs, Gondelas, etc., who are fond of hunting swine. But this activity of his will not in any way benefit the Christians, who are already very skilful in hunting swine. There are up to a thousand shops in London that sell the flesh of swine, and up to twenty-five thousand pigs are daily sent to the outlying areas of the city. The question is: is it worthy of a

Prophet who has appeared for the reform of mankind to waste his time hunting pig, a disgusting animal, while even touching the pig is a grave sin according to Torah. A question also arises that—while hunting is a hobby of the idle—if the Messiah is still to be so fond of hunting, is there any dearth of such good animals as deer, caribou, rabbits, etc., that he should soil his hands with the blood of such a foul animal?

I have presented here a picture of the character and activities of the Messiah in his second advent, as conceived by the bulk of the Muslims. It is for sensible people to consider how unnatural, contradictory and inconsistent with the high status of Prophethood all this is. It should be remembered that none of this nonsense is mentioned in either of the two great compilations of Aḥādīth. Imam Bukhārī has given no indication that the Messiah who is to come will be the same person as Jesus, son of Mary. On the contrary, he has narrated two actual sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), which distinguish the Second Messiah from the first. The connotation of one of these Aḥādīth is that the son of Mary will appear from among you, and it further clarifies that he will be your Imam from within you.

One should carefully consider how the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), in order to remove any misunderstanding which may result from the name ‘son of Mary’, goes on to say: Do not take him to be the son of Mary himself, rather:

بَلْ هُوَ إِمَامُكُمْ مِنْكُمْ¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ ‘He will be your Imam from among your own people.’ [Publisher]

The other Ḥadīth, which gives the same indication, is that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) described the features of the first and the second Messiah differently. His description of the features of the second Messiah fits me exactly. Is the clear distinction between the features of the two not enough to prove that the first and the second Messiah are in fact two distinct personalities?

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 121-125]

It would not be without interest to mention that the Promised Messiah's appearance was awaited by all Muslim sects and everyone was looking forward to the fulfilment of the prophecies predicting this event in the context of the repeated sayings of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Many who were favoured with visions had intimated, on the basis of revelation, that the Promised Messiah would appear at the beginning of the fourteenth century of the Islamic era. The advent of the Promised Messiah is only briefly referred to in the Holy Qur'ān, but it is mentioned so frequently in Aḥādīth, that it is unreasonable to deny its authenticity. Of all the prophecies made by the Holy Prophet^{sa}, this is the one that has been reported more than any other....

It is a pity, however, that despite its frequent occurrence, the divines of this age of ignorance have gone utterly astray in construing this prophecy correctly. In consequence of their grave misunderstanding, they have inserted shameful contradictions into the body of this doctrine. On the one hand, they are compelled to believe, in accordance with the Holy Qur'ān and true Aḥādīth, that Jesus^{as} has died; and, on the other, they believe that he has not died and is alive in heaven in his physical body, and will descend to earth some time in the latter

days. Again they hold, on the one hand, that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was the last Prophet, and yet they also believe that a Prophet will come after him, namely Jesus^{as} son of Mary. They believe on the one hand that the Promised Messiah will appear when the Antichrist has supremacy over the whole world, with the exception of Mecca and Medina. On the other, they are compelled to believe, in accordance with a true tradition narrated by Bukhārī, that the Promised Messiah will appear at the time of the supremacy of the cross, that is to say at the time when Christianity will be dominant, and the power and the wealth of Christians will be greater than all others. Again, they believe that the Promised Messiah will not be the Mahdī and the Imam, rather some other person from the descendants of the Holy Prophet^{sa} will be the Mahdī. In short, they set forth so many contradictions that they have created serious doubts about the very truth of this prophecy; for a collection of contradictions cannot be true, and sensible people cannot accept it at the cost of reason. That is why the newly educated section of Muslims, who judge everything by the criteria of nature, its laws and the dictates of reason, have been compelled to reject this prophecy despite its frequent occurrence. Indeed, if this prophecy can only be interpreted in a manner that would entail so many contradictions, then human reason, failing to reconcile them, would resolve the difficulty by rejecting the prophecy altogether. That is why those who are committed to nature and reason have rejected this great prophecy despite its frequency. It is a pity, however, that these people were hasty in their rejection of the prophecy, as no sensible person should reject a prophecy that is reported with such persistence and frequency

as to guarantee its accuracy. The way of fairness and support of the truth was not to reject the prophecy, but to reject the interpretations put upon it by the foolish clerics which entail all manners of contradiction. It is the faulty reasoning of the dim-witted clerics which has misinterpreted a simple prophecy in such a way that it has become a myriad of contradictions which have bewildered every research minded people.

True Meaning of the Ascension and Second Coming of Jesus

God Almighty has now disclosed the true meaning of the prophecy, which is free from all contradictions and unreasonableness. He has thus furnished every fair-minded seeker of truth the opportunity to accept the prophecy and to look for its fulfilment, thus safeguarding himself against rejecting a clear and true prophecy.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 205-211, footnote]

There are great difficulties in interpreting this prophecy literally, for this would invite all manner of objections before the Messiah even descends from heaven. There is no need for us to get involved in these difficulties. Why should we seek to bring the son of Mary down from heaven and deprive him of his Prophethood? Why should we degrade him so that someone else should be the Imam and he should be the follower; and another should take the covenant of allegiance as the Imam and Khalīfa while he should be a helpless spectator; and he should become a common Muslim, and dare not even mention his Prophethood?

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, p.174]

Sensible people had no difficulty in understanding this prophecy as the holy words of the Holy Prophet (peace

and blessings of Allah be upon him) clearly indicated that it did not mean the second coming of a Prophet of Israel himself; for he had repeatedly affirmed that there would be no Prophet after him. The Ḥadīth ¹⁴⁵ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدِي was so well-known that no one entertained any doubt about it. The Holy Qur'ān, every word of which is conclusive and final, had also confirmed it in the verse

وَلَا يَكُنْ رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ ¹⁴⁶

that Prophethood had come to an end with the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Then how was it possible that anyone, with the status of an independent Prophet, should come after the Holy Prophet^{sa}? Such an event would altogether disrupt the whole pattern of Islām. To assert, on the other hand, that Jesus^{as} would come a second time, bereft of his Prophethood, would be the height of impertinence and shamelessness. Can a Prophet like Jesus (peace be on him), who is accepted of God Almighty and one of His favourites, ever be deprived of his Prophethood?

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 217-218, footnote]

The 'Descent' or the 'Coming' does not mean the coming of the Messiah son of Mary; it is actually a figure of speech signifying the coming of someone resembling the son of Mary; and, in accordance with Divine intimation and revelation, it is the present writer—my own humble self—to whom it applies.

I am only too well aware that as soon as this view of mine, which is based on clear and definite revelation, is

¹⁴⁵ 'There is no Prophet after me.' [Publisher]

¹⁴⁶ 'But he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

made public, many a hostile pen shall come alive and there will be a public outcry full of horror and rejection....

There are two Prophets concerning whom it has been supposed, on the basis of the Bible, Aḥādīth and some scriptures, that they were raised bodily to heaven; one was John, whose name is also Elia or Elias, and the other is Jesus, son of Mary. Some of the books of the Old and New Testaments state, with regard to both of them, that they were raised bodily to heaven and will at some time be seen descending upon the earth. Some of the Aḥādīth also use similar expressions with reference to them. With regard to Elias, the Gospels state that the prophecy concerning his descent was fulfilled in the advent of John the son of Zachariah. Jesus clearly said: John is Elias who was to come. Let him, who will, accept. Thus the controversy regarding the physical ascent to heaven of one of them and his descent at some later time, was settled by a Prophet, namely Jesus, and his second coming was thus explained. The agreed Christian doctrine, in accordance with the Bible, is that Elias descended from heaven in the time of Jesus, when one possessing his power and spirit was born to Zechariah as his son and was named John. But the Jews still await his descent. They believe that he will descend physically from heaven....In any event, Jesus furnished the true interpretation of the expression 'descent from heaven' and the manner of the descent of Elias was settled. But with regard to Jesus, it is still asserted emphatically that he will descend physically from heaven wearing luxurious robes and in the company of angels. Christians and Muslims do not agree on the place of the descent, whether he will descend in Mecca, or in some church in London or the Imperial Cathedral in

Moscow. Had not the Christians been impelled by age-old mischief, they could have appreciated more easily than the Muslims that the descent of Jesus should be in accord with the interpretation of descent furnished by Jesus himself....

The Christians also believe that Jesus entered heaven after his ascent. According to Luke, Jesus tried to comfort a thief with the assurance: 'You will enter heaven with me today.' Christians also believe that a person, however low his station, who is once admitted to heaven will not be expelled from there. Muslims also believe the same, as Allah the Glorious has said:

وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرَجِينَ¹⁴⁷

'Those who are granted admission into Paradise will not be expelled therefrom.'

Though there is no express mention in the Holy Qur'ān of the entry of Jesus into heaven, yet his death is mentioned at three different places. In the case of holy personages, death and entry into heaven are simultaneous, as is indicated by the verses:

قِيلَ ادْخُلِ الْجَنَّةَ¹⁴⁸

وَادْخُلِي جَنَّتِي¹⁴⁹

they are made to enter paradise forthwith. It is now incumbent upon both Muslims and Christians to consider whether it is possible that a favourite of God, like Jesus, should be admitted to heaven and then be expelled from it. Would this not be contrary to the promise of God

¹⁴⁷ Al-Hijr, 15:49 [Publisher]

¹⁴⁸ 'It was said to *him*, Enter Paradise.'—Yā Sīn 36:27 [Publisher]

¹⁴⁹ 'And enter thou My Garden.'—Al-Fajr, 89:31 [Publisher]

Almighty, which is clearly set out repeatedly in all holy books?...The disbelievers of Mecca had demanded from the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that he should ascend to heaven and descend therefrom while they watched, and he was instructed to say:

¹⁵⁰ قُلْ سُبْحَانَ رَبِّي

This means that the wisdom of God Almighty does not permit the exhibition of such extraordinary signs in this world, since such exhibition would destroy the reality of faith in the unseen.

How can that which was not permissible in the case of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, who was the best of Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), be permissible in the case of Jesus? It would be the height of disrespect to hold that a situation was not permissible in the case of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and yet accept it as permissible in the case of Jesus. No true Muslim can be guilty of such impertinence....

Our lord and master, the Seal of Prophets, has distinguished between the first Messiah and the second Messiah by declaring not only that the second Messiah would be a Muslim who is bound by the commandments of the Holy Qur'ān, such as prayer and fasting etc., but he would be born in a Muslim home, would be the Imam of Muslims, would bring no new religion, would not claim any Prophethood apart from the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, but also has described the differences in features between the first and the second Messiah. The features of the first Messiah as observed by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) on

¹⁵⁰ Banī Isrā'īl, 17:94 [Publisher]

the night of his spiritual ascent was: medium height, rosy complexion, curly hair and a broad chest. (See *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, p.489.) But he described the features of the second Messiah as wheatish complexion and straight hair coming down to the ears (*Bukhārī*.) Does this distinction in their features not clearly establish that the first Messiah and the second Messiah are distinct personages? The designation of both as son of Mary is a fine metaphor that has been employed to indicate resemblance in their temperaments and spiritual qualities.

[*Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 51-59]

Misguidance about Jesus caused by the Antichrist

If you do not overlook the events of today, you will realize that the prevalent misguidance has been propagated by the Antichrist against whom every Prophet has warned, and whose foundation was laid by the Christian doctrine and the Christian people. It was therefore, necessary that the reformer of the age should be designated the Messiah, inasmuch as all corruption has proceeded from the followers of the Messiah. It has been revealed to me in a vision that Jesus was made aware of the poisonous atmosphere that has been spread in the world by the Christian people, in consequence of which, his soul was moved towards a spiritual descent and in its agitation, finding his people bent upon ruin, it desired a substitute on earth who should resemble him and should possess an identical temperament. Therefore, God Almighty granted him, according to His promise, one whose soul resembled his soul, upon whom were bestowed the resolve, character and spirituality of Jesus. A close relationship was established between him and Jesus as if the two had been fashioned out of the same jewel. The spiritual attention of Jesus made the heart of the other its resting place

and desired to fulfil itself through him. In this sense his being became the being of Jesus and the passionate intentions of Jesus descended upon it, a descent that was metaphorically described as the descent of Jesus. It is a spiritual mystery that sometimes so firm a spiritual relationship is established between the holy ones who have passed away and those who are living, through the reflection of their attention and the unity of their thinking, that those in heaven regard those on earth as their spiritual substitutes. The designs generated in their hearts in heaven are correspondingly generated by God's command in the hearts of their reflections on earth. A soul which is thus united with one on earth is bestowed the capacity to communicate its designs fully to that soul. This transfer takes place under Divine direction. This is the Divine way in which Prophets and the holy ones who have passed away descend upon the earth. It was thus that Prophet Elijah descended in the form of John the Baptist. This is also the true meaning of the descent of Jesus, which has been revealed to me. If anyone should still persist in denial I would be ready to enter into a *Mubāhalah* [Prayer duel] with him.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 254-256]

Correct Meanings of *Nuzūl*

It is asked: how can we reject the clear and obvious statements of the Aḥādīth which expressly state that Jesus, son of Mary, would descend from heaven near the eastern minaret of Damascus with his hands on the shoulder of two angels? The answer is that descent in this context does not mean descent from heaven in a physical body. The Aḥādīth do not even employ the word 'heaven'. The Arabic word *Nuzūl* [descent] is commonly used to connote arrival. A person who arrives at one

place from another is described as having descended at that place. For instance, it is said that an army or a camp has descended at such and such a place. This does not mean that the army or the camp have descended from heaven. The Holy Qur'ān has also employed the expression *Nuzūl* [descent] for the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him). It is also stated in a verse that iron has descended from heaven.¹⁵¹ It is thus obvious that this descent does not connote what people have imagined.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 132-133]

The word *Nuzūl* is being deliberately misinterpreted. In the idiom of scriptures, he who comes from God is described as having descended from heaven (see John 1:38).¹⁵² The same is indicated in the verses:

لَا تَأْتِي السَّمَاءُ بِشَيْءٍ
ذِكْرًا رَسُولًا¹⁵⁴

Common people, whose thinking is earthy, interpret everything in a physical sense. They do not stop to reflect that as according to their conception Jesus will descend from heaven in the company of angels, in the same way they also believe that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had ascended to heaven in the company of angels, indeed there was also a *burraq* at his service. But did anyone observe the ascent and descent of

¹⁵¹ The reference is to Al-Ḥadīd, 57:26. [Publisher]

¹⁵² John 1:30 in the New King James Version. [Publisher]

¹⁵³ 'Surely, We sent it down on the Night of Destiny.'—Al-Qadr, 97:2 [Publisher]

¹⁵⁴ 'Allah has sent down to you a Reminder—A Messenger.'—Al-Ṭalāq, 65:11-12 [Publisher]

the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or did anyone see the angels and the *burāq*? It is obvious that the disbelievers did not see the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) being carried to heaven by the angels nor did they see him descending therefrom. That is why they asserted that the spiritual ascent of the Holy Prophet^{sa} was not a fact. How misguided, therefore, are those who are waiting to see Jesus descend from heaven in the company of angels. If the Chief of the Prophets was not seen ascending to or descending from heaven, then will they see Jesus descending therefrom?

لعنة الله على الكذابين¹⁵⁵

Did Abū Bakr Ṣiddīq observe the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) ascend or descend from heaven in the company of angels on the night of *Me'rāj*? Did 'Umar Fārūq enjoy the privilege of such observation? Did 'Alī Murtaḍā partake of such spectacle? Then who are you and what is your standing that you would see the Promised Messiah descending from heaven in the company of angels? The Holy Qur'ān rejects the very idea of such a spectacle.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 326-327]

Muslims should beware of the dangerous situation in which the Jews placed themselves by insisting on the literal fulfilment of the prophecy concerning the second coming of Elijah. It is sheer folly to insist upon something of which there has been no instance before and the falsity of which has been repeatedly demonstrated. God Almighty has said:

¹⁵⁵ 'May Allah's curse be upon the liars.' [Publisher]

فَسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ¹⁵⁶

‘Ask the Jews and the Christians for an example of the ways of Allah, if you do not know.’

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 13, p. 43]

The Ḥadīth of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* which says that the Messiah would descend near the white eastern minaret of Damascus has throughout puzzled the scholars, for it is not clear what relationship Messiah has with Damascus....

A little attention resolved this difficulty in my mind and it was disclosed to me, in a clear vision, that the intimation in the compilation of Abū Dāwūd that a person designated *Ḥārith* or *Ḥarrāth* [a cultivator] ill appear is correct and is identical with the prophecy of the second advent of the Messiah and that both have reference to me.

It has been disclosed to me that the word Damascus in the prophecy means a town which is home to a people who resemble Yazīd and think and act like him. Their hearts feel no love for Allah or His Messenger and they do not esteem Divine commandments. They worship their selfish desires and are so committed to the dictates of their evil egos, that they esteem the blood of the pure and the holy lightly. They do not believe in the hereafter; and the existence of God Almighty is for them a mystery which they cannot understand. Just as a physician is needed for the sick, it was necessary that the Messiah should appear among such people. It has been disclosed to me that the word Damascus here indicates a place which possesses this important characteristic peculiar to Damascus. The use of this word in connection with the

¹⁵⁶ Al-Naḥl, 16:44 [Publisher]

place of the appearance of the Messiah is an indication that the Messiah does not mean Jesus who was given the Gospel but he is someone from among the Muslims who, in his spiritual condition, resembles both the Messiah and Imam Ḥussain....

The word Damascus clearly indicates that Jesus is not the Messiah who was to come, but as the Yazīdīs resemble the Jews in the same way the Messiah who is to come resembles Jesus and possesses the temperament of Ḥussain. This is a very subtle point: the word Damascus has been used metaphorically. As the tragedy of Imam Ḥussain was an enormity in the estimation of God Almighty and resembled closely the tragedy of Jesus, as even the Christians would acknowledge, therefore, God Almighty desired that the coming generations may be apprised of its enormity and its resemblance to the tragedy of Jesus. Damascus has been metaphorically mentioned in this context so that the readers might be reminded of the time when the beloved grandson of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was, like Jesus, put to the sword most tyrannically by the wretches of Damascus. Thus God Almighty particularly mentioned Damascus, wherefrom such tyrannical directions had issued and which was the home of such hard-hearted and dark-minded people, as an indication that the place which resembled Damascus would now become the headquarter for the propagation of faith and justice.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 134-137, footnote]

I would now like to draw attention to the Ḥadīth narrated by Abū Dāwūd in his compilation. It contains a prophecy that a person designated as *Ḥārith*, or a cultivator, will appear from Transoxiana, that is to say, from the direction of Samarkand, who will lend support to the

descendants of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and it would be obligatory on every believer to help and support him. It has been revealed to me that this prophecy and the prophecy of the advent of the Promised Messiah, who will be one of the Muslims and will be their Imam, relate to the same event and both have reference to me. The prophecy that relates to the Promised Messiah has two special aspects. One is that through his true teaching he will reform the spiritual condition of the Muslims which will be utterly corrupt at the time of his advent and; he will totally remove their spiritual poverty and inner indigence and present them the jewels of knowledge, verities and comprehension in excess of their need. No seeker after truth from among them will remain spiritually poor and indigent. All those who hunger and thirst for truth will be provided in abundance with the wholesome food of truth and the sweet drink of comprehension. Their pockets will be filled with the pearls of true knowledge and they will be given phialae filled with the perfume of the true meaning of the Holy Qur'ān.

The second special aspect of the prophecy, which relates to the advent of the Promised Messiah, is that he will break the cross, slaughter the swine and kill the one-eyed Antichrist. Every disbeliever who is touched by his breath will die instantly. The spiritual interpretation of this special aspect is that the Promised Messiah will crush under his feet all the glory of the religion of the cross, that he will destroy with the weapon of conclusive arguments those who are afflicted with shamelessness like swine, and who devour filth like pigs, and that he will wipe out with the sword of clear proofs the opposition of those who possess only the eye of the world and are bereft of the eye of the faith in place of which they

have only an unsightly taint. Not only such one-eyed ones, but also every disbeliever who views Islām with contempt will suffer spiritual extinction through the glorious breath of Messianic reasoning. In short all these signs are metaphoric, the significance of which has been fully revealed to me. Some may not appreciate it at this time but after waiting for sometime, and despairing altogether of the hopes that they now entertain, all of them will accept it.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 141-143 footnote]

It is an absurdity to interpret literally the Ḥadīth of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* which says that when the Messiah descends from heaven he will be wearing yellow robes. There appears no reason for this peculiarity. If this indication is interpreted according to the principles of the interpretation of dreams, it would mean that when the Promised Messiah announces his claim he would not be in good health.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 142-143]

The account of the *Me'rāj* [spiritual ascent of the Holy Prophet^{sa}] set out in *Bukhārī*, which describes his meeting with some of the Prophets, makes no mention that Jesus was there in his physical body. The meeting of the Holy Prophet^{sa} with Jesus is described in exactly the same terms as his meeting with Abraham^{as} and Moses^{as}. His dialogue with Moses^{as} is set out in detail. There can, therefore, be no doubt that if on the basis of this Ḥadīth Jesus^{as} had been raised bodily to heaven so must Abraham^{as} and Moses^{as} have been bodily raised, inasmuch as the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw all of them in the same condition. He did not observe any particular dress or other sign of a bodily ascent about Jesus, which was not visible with regard to the

other Prophets.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 153-154]

Nowhere does the Holy Qur'ān mention the bodily ascent of Jesus to heaven. His death, on the other hand, is specifically mentioned at several different places. One of these contains Jesus' own confession of his death:

وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَّا دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي
¹⁵⁷ كُنْتُ أَنتَ الرَّقِيبُ عَلَيْهِمْ وَأَنتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

As his death is established, it follows that his body must have been buried in the earth like the bodies of all dead people. The Holy Qur'ān expressly states that it was his soul that ascended to heaven and not his body. That is why, in the verse just cited, he clearly acknowledged his death. Had he ascended to heaven alive in his physical body, he would not have said that he had departed the earth after his death. And, obviously, if it was only his soul which had ascended to heaven, then how can he possibly descend in his physical body?...

If we were to assume that he had ascended to heaven in his physical body, we would have to acknowledge that, like all human and animal bodies, his body must also be affected by the passage of time and that one day he must die. Thus he may have died in heaven having lived out his normal span of life and may have been interned in a graveyard on some planet which is now supposed to be capable of supporting human life. On the other hand, if we are to assume the impossible—that he is still physi-

¹⁵⁷ 'And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them; and Thou art Witness over all things.'—Al-Mā'idah, 5:118 [Publisher]

cally alive, then, after the passage of so many centuries, he must have arrived at extreme old age and will no longer be capable of performing any religious function or service. His descent upon earth in such a condition would serve no useful purpose and would only put him to unnecessary travail.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 125-127]

Evidence regarding the Death of Jesus

We have so many certain and conclusive proofs of the death of Jesus, son of Mary, that they cannot all be set out in this brief publication. Read the Holy Qur'ān carefully and you will find the death of Jesus mentioned so clearly and definitely that it is not possible to interpret it otherwise. For instance, the Holy Qur'ān reports the acknowledgement of Jesus:

فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ¹⁵⁸

Can we interpret the word *Tawaffi* in this verse as meaning sleep? Would it be right to understand this verse as meaning: Since Thou didst cause me to sleep Thou hast been the One to watch over them? Of course not. The only appropriate interpretation of *Tawaffi* in this context is the straightforward one of death; and the context does not permit us to interpret that death will occur after Jesus' bodily ascent to heaven. This is because the question put to Jesus refers to the going astray of his people, which had happened after his supposed bodily ascent to heaven and had been completed before the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.)

¹⁵⁸ 'Since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher over them.'—Al-Mā'idah, 5:118 [Publisher]

The Ḥadīth also confirms the death of Jesus^{as}. On page 162 of the Commentary *Ma‘ālim* it is mentioned on the authority of ‘Alī bin Ṭalḥah that Ibn-e-‘Abbās^{ra} interpreted the verse:

يُعِيسِي إِيَّيْ مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَ رَافِعُكَ إِيَّيْ

to mean إِيَّيْ مُمِيتُكَ i.e., ‘I will cause you to die.’ This is supported by other verses like:

قُلْ يَتَوَفَّاكُمْ مَلَكُ الْمَوْتِ

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِينَ

الَّذِينَ تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ ظَالِمِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ

Thus Ibn-e-‘Abbās, may Allah be pleased with him, believed that Jesus had died. Our readers must be aware that Ibn-e-‘Abbās was among the foremost of those who comprehended the Holy Qur’ān perfectly. The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) had prayed for him that he might be bestowed true knowledge of the Holy Qur’ān.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 3, pp. 224-225]

It is for this purpose that Imam Bukhārī (may Allah have mercy on him), has quoted the verse:

فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ

¹⁵⁹ ‘O Jesus, I will cause thee to die a natural death and will exalt thee to Myself.’—Āl-e-mrān, 3:56 [Publisher]

¹⁶⁰ Say, ‘The angel of death...will cause you to die.’—Al-Sajdah, 32:12 [Publisher]

¹⁶¹ ‘Those whom the angels cause to die while they are pure.’—Al-Naḥl, 16:33 [Publisher]

¹⁶² ‘Those whom the angels cause to die while they are wronging their souls.’—Al-Naḥl, 16:29 [Publisher]

¹⁶³ ‘Since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the Watcher

in *Kitāb-ut-Taḥṣīn*. In so doing, he intended to convey that the correct interpretation of the word *Tawaffaitanī* is the one which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) attributed to it, that is to say, ‘Thou didst cause me to die’. In the following Ḥadīth:

عَنِ ابْنِ عَبَّاسٍ أَنَّهُ إِجَاءَ بِرَجَالٍ مِنْ أُمَّتِي فَيُؤْخَذُ بِهِمْ ذَاتُ
الشَّمَالِ فَأَقُولُ يَا رَبِّ أَصِبْحَائِي فَيُقَالُ إِنَّكَ لَا تَذَرُنِي مَا أَحَدْتُوْا
بَعْدَكَ فَأَقُولُ كَمَا قَالَ الْعَبْدُ الصَّالِحُ وَكُنْتُ عَلَيْهِمْ شَهِيدًا مَا
دُمْتُ فِيهِمْ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي كُنْتُ أَنْتَ الرَّقِيبَ عَلَيْهِمْ

the Holy Prophet^{sa} says that: “on the Day of Judgement some of my people will be driven to hell, and I will supplicate, ‘Lord! these are my companions’. Then it will be said to me, ‘You know not what they did after you’. Upon this I will say what a righteous servant of God, i.e., Jesus son of Mary, had said when he was asked: ‘Did you teach your people that they should worship you and your mother as gods?’ I will say what Jesus had then said: ‘I was witness over them while I was amongst them; but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the One to watch over them.’” (*Bukhārī*)

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) meant that he would make the same affirmation as Jesus would make when he would be asked whether he had taught his people to take him and his mother as gods. In this manner the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) interpreted the expression *Tawaffaitanī* as meaning death.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 585-586]

I put only one question to the clerics who differ with me on the question of the death of Jesus. Had they pondered over it sincerely, it would have been enough to guide them aright, but they did not ponder over it, as none was desirous of being rightly guided. My question is: Twice has Allah the Glorious, applied the expression *Tawaffi* in the Holy Qur'ān with reference to Jesus^{as}; and the same has been applied to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); and it has also been used in the prayer of Joseph (peace be on him.) There are several other places where it has been used in the Holy Qur'ān. Pondering over all these references, a just minded person would be satisfied that in each case *Tawaffi* connotes death and nothing but death. The expression *Tawaffi* has been used in hundreds of places in the Aḥādīth but nobody can show you a single occasion where it has been used to connote anything other than death. If an illiterate Arab were told *Tuwaffiya Zaidun* he would understand by it that Zaid has died. Whenever a companion or a relative of the Holy Prophet^{sa} died, he always used the expression *Tawaffi* for the purpose of conveying that the person mentioned had died. When he himself died, the companions used the expression *Tawaffi* to convey that he had died. In the same way, this expression was used to indicate the death of Abū Bakr, 'Umar and all other companions of the Holy Prophet (May Allah be pleased with them.) The use of this word to indicate the death of a Muslim is an honourable way of conveying the news of his death. In view of all this, why is it that this expression, when used with reference to Jesus, should be interpreted in any other way?

[Itmām-ul-Hujjah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 8, pp. 292-293]

In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, the word *Tawaffi* has

always been used in the connotation of death and taking possession of the soul. A minute study of Arabic prose and poetry—both ancient and modern—shows that wherever the expression *Tawaffi* is used for a human being, and the action is attributed to Allah the Glorious, *Tawaffi* invariably means death and taking possession of the soul. In this context, there is not a single instance, where this expression means anything other than taking possession of the soul. Those who are wont to refer to lexicons like *Qāmūs*, *Ṣiḥaḥ*, *Ṣarāḥ*, etc., have not found a single instance where, in the context that we have mentioned, any other connotation has been attributed to the expression *Tawaffi*. There is not the slightest indication of the possibility of any other connotation. Then I studied the books of Ḥadīth to discover whether the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or his companions had on any occasion applied the expression *Tawaffi* to a human being in any other connotation than that of death and taking possession of the soul. I had to labour hard in this search. What I discovered on checking every page of the compilations of *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Tirmadhī*, *Ibn-e-Mājah*, *Abū Dāwūd*, *Nasa'ī*, *Dārimī*, *Mu'attā'* and *Sharḥ-us-Sunnah* etc., was that the expression *Tawaffi* has been used three hundred and forty six times, and in no single instance has it been used, either by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) or by his companions, to mean anything other than 'death', or 'taking possession of the soul'. I have gone through these books with great care line by line, and I can say that on each and every occasion the expression *Tawaffi* has been used only in the connotation of death or taking possession of the soul. A careful perusal of these books also establishes that, from

the moment of the Call and all through his life, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) never used the expression *Tawaffi* in any connotation other than death and taking possession of the soul....

Imam Muḥammad Ismā‘īl Bukhārī has made a fine point in his compilation which indicates that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) used the expression *Tawaffi* at least seven thousand times between his Call and his death, and every time he used it in the connotation of death and taking possession of the soul. Seekers after truth should be grateful to Imam Bukhārī for this information.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in*, vol. 3, pp. 583-585]

If anyone can cite a single instance from the Holy Qur’ān or Ḥadīth, or from ancient or modern Arabic poetry and prose, that the word *Tawaffi*, when applied to a human being, God being the subject, has been used in any connotation other than death and taking possession of the soul, for instance, in the connotation of the taking the body, I bind myself on oath that I shall pay that person one thousand rupees in cash by selling some of my property and shall always hold him in high esteem as a great scholar of the Holy Qur’ān and Ḥadīth.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in*, vol. 3, p. 603]

The Holy Qur’ān clearly states that there never was a Prophet who did not pass away:

مَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ ۖ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ
أَفَأَنْتُمْ مَتَّاتُونَ قِيلَ أَنْتُمْ عَلَىٰ أَعْقَابِكُمْ¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ ‘Muḥammad is only a Messenger. Verily, *all* Messengers have passed away before him. If then he die or be slain, will you turn back on your heels?’—Āl-e-Imrān, 3:145 [Publisher]

وَمَا جَعَلْنَا لِبَشَرٍ مِّن قَبْلِكَ الْخُلْدَ ¹⁶⁵

وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَا يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ وَمَا كَانُوا خَالِدِينَ ¹⁶⁶

To conceive of Jesus as alive in the face of these verses, and to believe, contrary to the purport of the verse:

وَمَا جَعَلْنَاهُمْ جَسَدًا لَا يَأْكُلُونَ الطَّعَامَ ¹⁶⁷

that Jesus is alive in heaven like the angels, without the need of food, would be to turn away from the Holy Word of God.

I again affirm that if Jesus is alive in heaven in his physical body, then the Divine reasoning set out in one of the above verses—that if the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were to die it would not be inconsistent with his Prophethood as all Prophets before him have been subject to death—would be accounted as defective and meaningless. Surely God Almighty is far above saying that which is not true and is against the facts.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 277-278]

The Holy Qur'ān says:

وَالَّذِينَ يَدْعُونَ مِن دُونِ اللَّهِ لَا يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ ۝

أَمْوَاتٌ غَيْرُ أَحْيَاءٍ ۚ وَمَا يَشْعُرُونَ أَيَّانَ يُبْعَثُونَ ۝ ¹⁶⁸

(Sūrah Al-Naḥl, Part 14)

This means that: 'Those who are worshipped and called

¹⁶⁵ 'We granted not everlasting life to any human being before thee.'—Al-Anbiyā', 21:35 [Publisher]

¹⁶⁶ 'And We did not give them bodies that ate no food, nor were they to live forever.'—Al-Anbiyā', 21:9 [Publisher]

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Al-Naḥl, 16:21-22 [Publisher]

upon beside Allah cannot create anything but are themselves created. They are dead, not living. They do not know when they will be resurrected.’

Just see how clearly these verses affirm the death of all those human beings who were worshipped as gods by the Jews and Christians and some of the Arab tribes and to whom they supplicated. If you are still not convinced of the death of Jesus son of Mary, why don’t you simply admit that you are not prepared to believe in the Holy Qur’ān?

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 3, p. 431]

Question: Though the Holy Qur’ān affirms the death of Jesus, it does not specify when he died. Why not reconcile the Qur’ān and Aḥādīth by adopting the position that Jesus will die after his descent upon earth?

Answer: The Holy Qur’ān clearly says that Jesus died in the period when he was raised to reform the tribes of Israel which had gone astray; as Allah the Glorious, has said:

يُعِيسَىٰ رَبِّي مُتَوَفِّيكَ وَرَافِعُكَ إِلَيَّ وَمُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا
وَجَاعِلُ الَّذِينَ اتَّبَعُوكَ فَوْقَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا إِلَىٰ يَوْمِ الْقِيَمَةِ¹⁶⁹

In this verse, ‘I shall cause thee to die’ precedes ‘I shall exalt thee’, which shows that death occurred before exaltation. A further proof is that Allah the Glorious, has said: After thy death I shall place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve (i.e., the Jews), until the Day of Judgement. All Christians and Muslims agree that this

¹⁶⁹ ‘O Jesus, I will cause thee to die *a natural death* and will exalt thee to Myself, and will clear thee from *the charges of* those who disbelieve, and will place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Resurrection.’—Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:56 [Publisher]

prophecy had been fulfilled before the advent of Islām, inasmuch as God Almighty had subordinated the Jews to Christians and Muslims, and they have continued in that condition of subordination for centuries. The verse cannot be construed to mean that such subordination will take place after Jesus returns from heaven.

Allah the Glorious quotes Jesus in the Holy Qur'ān as saying:

وَأَوْصَيْنِي بِالصَّلَاةِ وَالزَّكَاةِ مَا دُمْتُ حَيًّا وَبَرًّا بِوَالِدَتِي¹⁷⁰

That is: 'God has enjoined upon me Prayer and almsgiving throughout my life and has made me dutiful towards my mother as long as I live'.

These commandments can obviously not be carried out in heaven. He who believes that Jesus was raised bodily to heaven will have to accept, according the above verse, that Jesus is still subject to all the commandments of the Torah and the Gospel, whereas this requirement cannot be fulfilled in heaven. It is also strange that, on the one hand, God Almighty should command Jesus to be dutiful to his mother throughout his life, but He should then separate him from her while he was still living; and that He should command him to give alms throughout his life, but should then convey him alive to a place where he cannot give alms himself nor can direct anyone else to do so; and that He should command him to observe Prayer, but should convey him far away from the company of the believers whose companionship was necessary for Prayer services. Did his bodily ascent to heaven have any other result than making him

¹⁷⁰ Maryam, 19:32-33 [Publisher]

incapable of discharging his obligations towards his fellow beings and from carrying out the duty of enjoining virtue and forbidding vice? Had he continued to live on earth during these 1891 years, how beneficial his person would have been for God's creatures! The only result of his bodily ascent to heaven was that his people went astray and he himself was totally deprived of the opportunity to carry out the functions of Prophethood.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 330-332]

We have established fully that the belief that Jesus had ascended bodily to heaven is not supported by the Holy Qur'ān and true Aḥādīth. It seems to be based upon senseless and contradictory speculation. In this philosophical age, which is accompanied by cultured reason and sharpness of intellect, it would be a great mistake to hope for religious success on the basis of such doctrines. If these meaningless speculations were to be presented to the illiterate Bedouins of Arabia, or the inhabitants of the deserts of Africa, or the wild dwellers of the far off islands in the oceans, they might gain some acceptance; but we cannot hope to propagate among educated people such doctrines as are utterly opposed to reason, experience, laws of nature and philosophy. Moreover, they cannot be attributed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); indeed they contradict the Aḥādīth. Nor can we present such doctrines as a gift to the scholars of Europe and America who are discarding the absurdities of their own respective faiths. How can those, whose hearts and minds have been developed by the light of new kinds of knowledge, accept such concepts which are disrespectful to God Almighty, denigrate His Unity, falsify His Law and abrogate the teachings of His Books?

The notion that Jesus will descend bodily from heaven is

only a consequence of the concept that he was raised bodily to heaven. Therefore, we should first consider whether or not the primary factor can be established on the basis of the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. If the basic factor is established, we will be able to accept that a person whose bodily ascent to heaven is proved could likewise descend bodily from heaven. But if the basic factor is not established on the authority of the Holy Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth and instead contradicts them, we cannot accept the accuracy of the alleged consequence. And if there should be any Aḥādīth whose purport might be indicative of such consequential proposition, we would try to reconcile them to the basic factor.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 235-236]

When the Muslims of our time affirm the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and his burial on earth, and at the same time affirm that Jesus is still alive, they furnish the Christians with a written acknowledgement that Jesus possessed qualities different from those of the common man and also different from all the Prophets. If it were true that while the Best of Mankind (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), who appeared six hundred years after Jesus, died after a brief life thirteen hundred years ago, yet Jesus has not yet died, would it not prove that Jesus possesses qualities that are superhuman? Though the Muslim divines of these times formally reject every form of association of partners with God, yet they lend their full support to those who are guilty of such association. It is an outrage that while Allah the Glorious, in His Holy Word, proclaims the death of Jesus, these divines create countless difficulties in the way of Islām by adhering to the notion that he is still alive. They acknowledge Jesus as ever-

living and self-subsisting in heaven, and affirm the death and burial upon earth of the Chief of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)! The Holy Qur'ān records the testimony of Jesus to the effect:

مُبَشِّرًا بِرَسُولٍ يَأْتِي مِنْ بَعْدِي اسْمُهُ أَحْمَدُ¹⁷¹

That is: 'I give glad tidings of a Messenger who will come after me (i.e., after my death,) whose name will be Aḥmad.'

Hence, if Jesus is still bodily alive, it follows that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has not yet appeared on earth.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 41-42].

It is absolutely wrong to say that Jesus (peace be on him) has ascended bodily to heaven. There is no proof of this in the Holy Qur'ān nor in Aḥādīth, nor can reason accept it; indeed the Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth and reason all three reject it. The Holy Qur'ān has clearly said that Jesus (peace be on him) has died, and the Ḥadīth narrating the *Me'rāj* [Spiritual Ascent] of the Holy Prophet^{sa} informs us that Jesus^{as} has joined the souls of the departed Prophets (peace be on them), and has cut asunder completely from the earth. Reason tells us that it is not the way of Allah that a mortal body should ascend to heaven and, discarding all the characteristics of earthly life like eating and drinking etc., should join the souls who have suffered bodily death and have arrived in the hereafter. Reason can furnish no such instance. Moreover, as the belief that Jesus (peace be on him) ascended bodily to heaven is inconsistent with the Holy Qur'ān, so is the doctrine of his bodily descent inconsistent with the Holy Qur'ān.

¹⁷¹ Al-Ṣaff, 61:7 [Publisher]

The Holy Qur'ān affirms the death of Jesus in the verses:

فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي¹⁷²
 قَدْ خَلَّيْتَ مِن قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلَ¹⁷³
 أَلْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ¹⁷⁴
 وَلَئِنْ رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ¹⁷⁵

and proclaims the end of normal Prophethood after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and clearly affirms that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is *Khātam-ul-Anbiyā'* by stating:

وَلَئِنْ رَّسُولَ اللَّهِ وَخَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ¹⁷⁶

But those who insist on bringing Jesus (peace be on him) back to the earth believe that he will return with the status of a Prophet and for forty-five years Gabriel shall continue to convey Prophetic revelation to him. What room does this doctrine leave for the belief that Prophethood ended with the Holy Prophet^{sa}? According to them it is Jesus who is the *Khātam-ul-Anbiyā'*.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 173-174].

The citation by Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), on the occasion of the death of the Holy

¹⁷² 'When Thou didst cause me to die.'—Al-Mā'idah, 5:118 [Publisher]

¹⁷³ 'Verily, all Messengers have passed away before him.'—Āl-e-Imrān, 3:145 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁴ 'This day have I perfected your religion for you.'—Al-Mā'idah, 5:4 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁵ 'But he is the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets.'—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:41 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

Prophet^{sa}, of the verse:

مَا مُحَمَّدٌ إِلَّا رَسُولٌ ۖ قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ¹⁷⁷

shows that he believed Jesus (peace be on him) to be dead. If this verse is to be construed to mean that some Prophets had died before the advent of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and some were still living, then it would not support the reasoning of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^{ra}, as it would not be an authority for the death of all previous Messengers. Yet none of the companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, who were all present on the occasion, took exception to the reasoning of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^{ra}, which shows that it was supported by the consensus of the companions, which is held as binding and can never err. One of the many favours that Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^{ra} bestowed upon the Muslims is that during his rightful Khilāfat he opened the door of truth and accuracy to deliver them from the error that was to arise in later times and erected such a strong barrier against the flood of misguidance as cannot be demolished by the divines of this age even if they were assisted by all the Jinns. So we pray that God Almighty may shower thousands of blessings on the soul of Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^{ra} who conclusively settled, on the basis of pure Divine revelation, that Jesus had died.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 461-462 footnote]

The Holy Qur'ān has categorically said that Jesus (peace be on him) had died. The verse:

فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ 'Muḥammad is only a Messenger; Verily, *all* Messengers have passed away before him.'—Āl-e-Imrān, 3:145 [Publisher]

¹⁷⁸ When Thou didst cause me to die. —Al-Mā'idah, 5:118 [Publisher]

clearly establishes that Jesus (peace be on him) died. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* furnishes proof on the authority of Ibn-e-‘Abbās (may Allah be pleased with him) that, in this verse, the expression *Tawaffī* connotes death. It is utterly wrong to suggest that the expression *Tawaffaitanī*, which is in the past tense, should be construed to indicate the future, that is to say, that Jesus^{as} had not yet died but would die in the latter days. The purport of the verse is that Jesus^{as} would submit that his people did not go astray in his lifetime but were led astray after his death. If it is assumed that Jesus (peace be on him) is not dead, it will also have to be acknowledged that the Christians have not yet gone astray, because the verse clearly states that they went astray after the death of Jesus^{as}. Only those who are utterly bereft of faith can deny such express authority.

Seeing that the Holy Qur’ān affirms the death of Jesus (peace be on him) and designates the Holy Prophet^{sa} as the Seal of Prophets, and Ḥadīth confirms both these verities and also states that the Messiah who is to come will be one of the Muslims, the question arises as to how such a consensus could have reached that Jesus^{as} would descend bodily from heaven in the latter days? The answer is that there never was such a consensus, and anyone who claims to the contrary must either be extremely stupid or dishonest. The companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} were in no need of looking into the details of this affair. According to the verse:

¹⁷⁹ فَلَمَّا تَوَفَّيْتَنِي

¹⁷⁹ ‘But when Thou didst cause me to die.’—Al-Mā’idah, 5:118
[Publisher]

they believed that Jesus^{as} had died. That is why when Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him), perceived at the time of the death of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) that some people were in doubt concerning his death, he emphatically affirmed that all Prophets had died and no one of them was alive. He recited the verse:

قَدْ خَلَتْ مِنْ قَبْلِهِ الرُّسُلُ¹⁸⁰

Not a single person questioned his statement. Then there is Imam Mālik, a great Imam, a reputed scholar of the Qur'ān and Ḥaḍīth and a righteous one; he believed that Jesus^{as} had died. So did Imam Bin Ḥazam whose high status is well known, and so did Imam Bukhārī whose compilation of Aḥādīth is known as the truest book after the Book of God. In the same way, the learned Muḥaddathīn and commentators Ibn-e-Taimiyyah and Ibn-e-Qayyim, who were the Imams of their respective ages, believed that Jesus^{as} had died. The Chief of the Sufis, Sheikh Moḥy-ud-Dīn Ibn Al-‘Arabī very clearly stated in his commentary that Jesus^{as} had died. The same has been the case with leading scholars, Muḥaddathīn and commentators. All the Imams and scholars of the Mu‘tazila held the same view. It would, therefore, be a daring invention to say that the bodily ascent of Jesus^{as} to heaven and his expected descent has been a matter of consensus. These are the beliefs of the people of the time when thousands of innovations had found their way into Islām. These were the middle ages which are described by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)

¹⁸⁰ ‘Verily, *all* Messengers have passed away before him.’—
Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:145 [Publisher]

as *Faij-e-A'waj*¹⁸¹. It is concerning these people that he said:

لَيْسُوا مِنِّي وَلَسْتُ مِنْهُمْ

‘They are not of me and I am not of them.’

In adopting such a belief, they transgressed from the Holy Qur’ān in four ways. They cannot cite any verse or any Ḥadīth in support of the fiction that Jesus^{as} had ascended bodily to heaven. They deceive the common people by adding the word heaven to the word *Nuzūl*, whereas it does not occur in any Ḥadīth whose accuracy is beyond doubt. In Arabic, the word *Nuzūl* merely means ‘arrival’, like the arrival of a traveller. In our own country, the equivalent of *Nuzūl* is used for the arrival of a stranger and no one has the slightest notion that such a one descends from heaven. A thorough search of the books of Ḥadīth of all Muslim sects would not produce a single Ḥadīth of any kind stating that Jesus^{as} had ascended bodily to heaven and would return to earth in some later age. If anyone should set forth such a Ḥadīth, we are prepared to pay him as much as twenty thousand rupees as penalty; we shall also publish a confession of our mistake and burn all our books. Let anyone who wishes come forward to satisfy himself.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 13, pp. 219-226 footnote]

That Jesus, son of Mary, will appear in the world by way of transmigration of souls is the worst and most shameful of notions. Those who believe in the transmigration of souls, believe that only an impure person would return to this life, but that those who leave the world, having

¹⁸¹ The time of great distortions.— [Publisher]

completed all stages of spiritual perfection, would stay in the house of salvation for a long time. Moreover, according to our belief, God Almighty has promised that those who are admitted to heaven would never be expelled therefrom. It surprises us as to why our divines would want to bring Jesus out of paradise. They relate the tale that Enoch, with the permission of the angel of death, stepped into paradise, and when the angel asked him to come out he refused to do so and recited the verse:

وَمَا هُمْ بِمُخْرَجِينَ¹⁸²

still they assert that Jesus will return to earth from heaven. Would he not be entitled to benefit from this verse? Is this verse to be considered abrogated in reference to him?

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 147-148]

True Status of Jesus

I do not deny the high status of Jesus^{as}, despite the fact that I have been informed by God that the Muḥammadi Messiah occupies a higher status than the Mosaic Messiah. I hold Jesus son of Mary, in high esteem inasmuch as I am spiritually the *Khātām-ul-Khulafā'* in the Islamic dispensation, just as Jesus was *Khātām-ul-Khulafā'* in the Israeli dispensation. In Mosaic dispensation the son of Mary was the Promised Messiah and in the Islamic dispensation I am the Promised Messiah; so I honour greatly the one whose name I bear. Anyone who asserts that I do not hold Jesus son of Mary in high esteem is a mischief-maker and a liar. I honour not only Jesus son of

¹⁸² ‘...Nor shall they *ever* be ejected therefrom.’—Al-Hijr, 15:49
[Publisher]

Mary but also his four brothers as they were all sons of the same mother. I also regard his two real sisters as holy, for they are all the children of the holy Mary.

[Kashtī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 17-18]

Our readers should remember that in dealing with the Christian religion we have to adopt the same form of exposition as they adopt against us. The Christians do not believe in the Prophet 'Īsā (peace be upon him), who called himself a servant of God and believed in the righteousness of previous Prophets and had faith in the advent of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and had even made a prophecy concerning him. They believe in someone called Jesus, who is not mentioned in the Qur'ān, and assert that he claimed to be God and designated previous Prophets as robbers etc. They also assert that he vigorously denied the truth of our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and prophesied that only false Prophets would appear after him. The Holy Qur'ān has not directed us to believe in any such person, but has clearly affirmed that anyone who claims to be God shall be consigned to hell. That is why, when speaking of the Jesus of the Christians, we have not spoken with such respect as is due to a righteous person. Had he not been blind, he would not have said that only impostors would follow him; and had he been good and faithful, he would not have claimed to be God. Our readers should not be misled into thinking that some of the harsh words that we have employed concerning him were intended for Ḥaḍrat 'Īsā (peace be on him.) They have been written concerning the Jesus of whom there is no mention in the Qur'ān or the Ḥaḍīth.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 295-296]

I regret to say that I have had to publish this issue of *Nūr-ul-Qur'ān* in response to a person who instead of referring to our lord and master, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) with respect, has vituperated him and has, out of his personal vileness, uttered so many calumnies against the Leader of the Righteous and the Chief of the Purified that a pure hearted person trembles at hearing them. In dealing with such a person, we had to adopt a severe tone.

I declare that my belief concerning the Messiah (peace be upon him) is an excellent belief. I hold sincerely that he was a true Prophet of God Almighty and was a loved one of His. I also believe, as the Holy Qur'ān tells us, that he believed sincerely in our lord and master Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as the means of his salvation. He was a sincere follower, out of many hundred such followers, of the Law of Moses (peace be on him.) I, therefore, give him all the respect due to his to his exalted status. But the Jesus presented by the Christians—who claimed to be God and considered everyone but himself to be accursed, i.e., he considered them guilty of such vices the punishment of which is a curse—is, in my view not entitled to the mercy of God. The Holy Qur'ān has not made any reference to such an impertinent and vile tongued Jesus. I am shocked by the conduct of one who believed that God could be subject to death and claimed godhead for himself and vilified such righteous ones as were a thousand times better than him. In dealing with Christians I have throughout had that fictitious Jesus in mind. The humble servant of God, 'Īsā, son of Mary, who was a Prophet and who is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān is not the one against whom my harsh words are directed. I have adopted this method after en-

during, for forty years, the abuse which Christian missionaries have hurled against the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Some foolish Maulavīs, who should rather be called blind, think that Christians have never reviled the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) But the truth is that the Christian missionaries are in the forefront of those who refer to the Holy Prophet^{sa} with contempt and defame and abuse him. I have a stock of books by Christian missionaries which are full of abuse of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. And whoso desires can come and inspect them. I declare that I shall henceforth deal respectfully with any Christian missionary who, discarding the method of abuse, adopts a respectful style of exposition. By having recourse to abuse, they themselves make their fictitious Jesus a subject of criticism. We have become weary of their abuse. If someone abuses another's father, would the wronged one not be justified in abusing the offender's father? What I have said is not abuse but a fact.

اِنَّمَا الْاَعْمَالُ بِالنِّيَّاتِ¹⁸³

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān, No. II, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 374-375]

Objections against Jesus

The wretched Jews of the time of Jesus (peace be upon him) planned his ruin and conspired to impose upon his righteous soul the curse of death upon the cross, as the Torah has declared that he who dies upon the rood would be accursed, which means that his heart would become vile and estranged from God and he would be rejected by God like Satan. That is why Satan is called the accursed one. This was an evil scheme which had been thought out

¹⁸³ 'Actions are judged by their intentions.' [Publisher]

with reference to the Messiah (peace be upon him) so that the people should conclude that he was not pure hearted and a true Prophet and a loved one of God but was accursed whose heart was vile, and that he was disgusted with God and God was disgusted with him. But God Almighty frustrated the wicked design of the Jews and not only rescued his righteous Prophet from death on the cross, but bestowed a long life of one hundred and twenty years upon him, during which all his Jewish enemies were destroyed. According to the eternal ways of God Almighty, every Prophet with a high resolve has to migrate on account of the persecution by his people. Therefore, Jesus (peace be upon him) also, after a ministry of three years, and having been rescued from death on the cross, migrated towards India. Having conveyed the Divine message to the other tribes of Israel, who, after the Babylonian dispersal, had settled in India, Kashmir and Tibet, he finally died in Kashmir and was honourably buried in Moḥallā Khānyār of Srinagar. His tomb is quite famous.

[Rāz-e-Ḥaqīqat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 154-155]

The Jews raise such strong objections concerning Jesus and his prophecies, that it is difficult for us to refute them. All we can say is that Jesus was undoubtedly a true Prophet, because this is what the Holy Qur'ān says. We have no other proof of his Prophethood. On the contrary, there can be several arguments in refutation of his Prophethood. It is the beneficence of the Qur'ān that he is included among true Prophets. That is why we believe that he was a Prophet, a chosen one of God and free from the calumnies which the Jews had uttered against him and his mother. It appears from the Holy Qur'ān that there were two principal charges against him:

1. He was accursed because his birth was illegitimate.
2. He death was accursed as he died upon the cross.

The Torah declares that a person of illegitimate birth is accursed and will not be admitted to heaven nor will he be spiritually exalted. It was also written that he who dies on the cross will be accursed and will not be spiritually exalted. These are grave charges indeed! The Holy Qur'ān has refuted them together in the same place:

وَيَكْفُرْهُمْ ذُّ قَوْلِهِمْ عَلَىٰ مَرْيَمَ بِهَتَاكَ عَظِيمًا ۝ ذُّ قَوْلِهِمْ إِنَّا قَتَلْنَا الْمَسِيحَ
عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ۚ وَمَا قَتَلُوهُ وَمَا صَلَبُوهُ وَلَٰكِن شُبِّهَ لَهُمْ¹⁸⁴

(Part Number 6, Sūrah Al-Nisā')

Here the response is given to both the allegations.

The meaning of these verses, in brief, is that: 'Jesus was neither of illegitimate birth nor did he die on the cross. It was mistakenly believed that he had so died. Hence he was accepted of God and was spiritually exalted like the other Prophets.'

There is no mention of his bodily ascent to heaven, as the Maulavīs would allege. The whole controversy was simply about his spiritual exaltation.

The Holy Qur'ān affirms his righteousness, but it is a pity that his prophecies are strongly criticized by the Jews and we have no answer to their criticism. We accept him sincerely as a true Prophet because the Holy Qur'ān so affirms; we have no other proof of his Prophethood. The Christians exalt him to godhood while there is little proof even of his Prophethood.

[I'jāz-e-Aḥmadī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 120-121]

¹⁸⁴ Al-Nisā', 4:157-158 [Publisher]

If we were to rely solely upon the available record, it would not be possible to establish the Prophethood of Jesus. On the contrary, he would be charged with falsehood and imposture. For instance, he whom he represented as the Prophet Elias denied that he was Elias. But as the Holy Qur'ān affirms the Prophethood of Jesus^{as}, we believe in him as such and regard his rejection as patent disbelief.

[Dīā-ul-Ḥaq, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 303-304]

Jesus (peace be upon him) has been a victim of the misguided in a strange manner. During his lifetime the disbelieving Jews called him an infidel, liar, deceiver and impostor and denied his spiritual exaltation. When he died, those who were inclined towards the worship of man deified him. The Jews denied his spiritual exaltation and were countered with the doctrine of his physical ascent to heaven. Previous Prophets were exalted to heaven spiritually after they had died, but Jesus was declared to be seated in heaven bodily in his clothes and with all human qualities while he was still alive. This was a reply to his persistent rejection by the Jews and their denial of his spiritual exaltation, but it was an altogether absurd reply.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 57].

A certain person named Ḥidāyatullāh has published a pamphlet in which he has accused me of denying the miracles of Jesus^{as}. In doing so, he has sought support from some paragraphs of my book *Izāla-e-Auhām*. Remember, such people are the victims of their own short sightedness and lack of intelligence. I do not deny the miracles of Jesus (peace be on him); there is no doubt that he did work some miracles. The Gospel accounts of

those miracles raise certain doubts about them, for instance, the reference to a certain pool, whose water possessed healing qualities, and the repeated affirmation of Jesus^{as} himself that he was not a worker of miracles. Yet we are not concerned with the Gospel; the Holy Qur'ān shows that he had been vouchsafed some signs. It is, however, a mistake on the part of our careless divines that they attribute certain qualities to Jesus whereby he used to fashion, like the Creator of the universe, the frame of a bird and made it alive by breathing into it so that it flew away, and he revived the dead with the touch of his hand, and he had knowledge of the unseen, and he did not suffer death and he is present in heaven in his physical body. If all that is attributed to him were true, then there would be no doubt about his being the knower of the unseen and reviver of the dead. If, on these premises, a Christian were to argue that Jesus was God on the basis of the proposition that the existence of the qualities of a thing is proof of the existence of the thing itself, then what answer would the Muslims give to such a claim? It would be a misinterpretation of the Holy Qur'ān to affirm that these miracles occurred as a result of prayer. The Holy Qur'ān does not mention any prayer in connection with the flight of something that was fashioned in the shape of a bird and was breathed into, nor does it state that such a shape became alive. It is not permissible to add something to the Divine Word from oneself. This was the kind of perversion on account of which the Jews were cursed. *Ma'ālim-ut-Tanzīl* and several other commentaries only state that those shapes flew for a short while and then fell to earth. As there is no proof that they possessed life, we can only assume that they were figures made out of clay which flew about like toys by some

human contrivance and under the spiritual influence of a Prophet; for, an affirmation of true creation on the part of Jesus would amount to a grave mischief and an association of partners with God. If all that is desired is proof of a miracle it is enough of a miracle for a lifeless thing to fly about for a short while. If it is alleged that any verse of the Holy Qur'ān affirms that the shape of clay was invested with life or that there is historical proof that those shapes became alive and laid eggs and hatched birds and many of their race are in existence today, then a proof must be produced of such assertions. The Holy Qur'ān affirms that even if the whole world joined together to create a fly it would not be able to do so, because in such a case it would become God's partner in creation. It would be equally absurd to affirm that God Almighty had permitted him to create birds. This would be preposterous, as there is no contradiction in the Word of God, and He does not bestow such permission upon anyone. God Almighty did not bestow upon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessing of Allah be upon him) permission to create even a fly. Then how could the son of Mary obtain such permission? Fear God, and do not seek to convert allegory into physical reality.

[Shahādat-ul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 372-374, footnote]

Miracles of Jesus

Certain Muslim sects believe that Jesus used to fashion different types of birds and used to invest them with life by breathing into them. On this basis I have been asked that as I claim to be the like of Jesus I should also fashion a bird and make it come alive by breathing into it. It is alleged that millions of birds created by Jesus fly about everywhere and that the like of Jesus should also create some birds.

The answer to all these superstitions is that the verses on which they are based are allegorical and it is the height of faithlessness and patent repudiation of the basic values of Islām to construe them as meaning that God Almighty had deliberately associated Jesus in His attribute of creation; inasmuch as it would be a negation of the Godhead to believe that God Almighty should invest someone else with His special attributes and His Divinity. One of these people was asked if he could distinguish those birds that had been created by God from those that were created by Jesus, but he confessed by remaining silent that he was unable to do so.

The doctrine that some birds are the creation of God Almighty and some are the creation of Jesus is altogether vicious and amounts to polytheism. Anyone holding such a belief cannot be a Muslim....

The miracles of Prophets are of two types. One are heavenly manifestations, in which human design and reason have no part, such as the splitting of the moon, which was a miracle of our lord and master, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and was manifested by the limitless power of God Almighty as a sign of the greatness of a righteous and perfect Prophet. Secondly, intellectual miracles, which are manifested through the extraordinary intelligence of a Prophet and which resemble Divine revelation. For instance, the miracle of Solomon^{as}, which was manifested in the shape of:

صَرَحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِنْ قَوَارِيرَ¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ 'A palace paved smooth with slabs of glass.'—Al-Naml, 27:45
[Publisher]

whereby the Queen of Sheba was blessed with faith.

It appears that this miracle of Jesus was purely intellectual like the miracle of Solomon. History reveals that in those days people were inclined towards the useless pursuit of sleight of hand, which astonished the common people. People like those who, in the time of the Pharaoh, used to manipulate the forms of serpents and other animals and made them move like living animals, had by the time of Jesus spread into the land of the Jews who had learnt magical tricks from them as is also indicated in the Holy Qur'ān. It is, therefore, not a matter of surprise that God Almighty may have instructed Jesus in some method whereby a toy fashioned out of clay could be manipulated by pressing a spring or breathing upon it so as to fly like a bird or to move on its feet. Jesus had worked with his father Joseph for twenty-two years as a carpenter, and carpentry stimulates a man's mind towards inventing different kinds of machines and mechanical instruments.

Miracles are granted to a person in accord with the faculties that he possesses. As the spiritual faculties of our lord and master, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) were well developed in the appreciation of spiritual verities, he was accordingly bestowed the miracle of the Holy Qur'ān, which is comprehensive of all verities and understandings of the Divine. It should, therefore, not be a matter of surprise if Jesus displayed an intellectual miracle to his opponents, like the one displayed by his ancestor, Solomon^{as}. Such a miracle is not beyond the reach of the intellect inasmuch as in our own time many mechanical experts are able to fashion birds that speak and move and wag their tails. I have also heard that some mechanical birds can even fly. Many

such toys are manufactured in Bombay, Calcutta, Europe, America and every year new one are introduced into the market.

As the Holy Qur'ān often employs metaphors, these verses can be construed to mean that birds signify the illiterate and simple people whom Jesus chose as his companions, who were like birds under his care, and into whom he breathed spiritual guidance whereby they began to fly.

Moreover, it is possible that such wonders might be performed like a pastime through hypnosis. Those who are experts in *'amal-ut-tirb* [psychokinetic exercises] can, by directing the warmth of their spirits towards certain objects, make them appear as if they were alive. The human soul possesses the capacity of directing its warmth upon a lifeless object so as to make it move as if it was alive. I have seen some practitioners of this phenomenon, who so warmed a wooden tripod by the touch of their hands through the exercise of their animal spirit that it began to move, and though several people mounted on it, it could not be stopped....It should be remembered that such an object which is fashioned out of clay or wood and is warmed by a spirit through *'amal-ut-tirb* does not become alive. It remains solid and lifeless; it is only made to move by the warmth of the spirit of the mesmerist.

It should also be remembered that the Holy Qur'ān does not affirm the movement or flight of such birds, nor their coming to life. It should also be kept in mind that curing diseases and influencing objects with the warmth of the spirit are all branches of mesmerism and there have always been people who healed the paralytics, the lepers and those suffering from tuberculosis through spiritual

exercises....It has been conclusively established that, under Divine direction, Messiah, son of Mary, was an expert in mesmerism, like the Prophet Isaiah, though he was not as great an expert as the latter, because even the bones of Isaiah performed the miracle that when they were brought into contact with a corpse, it came back to life; but the corpses of the two thieves who were nailed to the cross at the same time with Jesus were not revived through contact with his body. In any case, these mesmeric activities of Jesus were in accord with the thinking of his age for a special purpose. It should, however, be kept in mind that mesmerism is not worthy of such appreciation as the common people imagine. Had I not looked upon it with contempt and disgust, I could, by the grace of God Almighty and with His support, have performed the same wonders as were performed by Jesus. But I prefer the spiritual method that was followed by the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Jesus had adopted this method under Divine direction in view of the earthy and low thinking of the Jews, which had become their second nature. In truth he was not fond of this method.

One evil characteristic of this physical practice is that a person who continues to employ his emotional and intellectual faculties to heal physical maladies suffers a serious decline of the spiritual capacities, which heal spiritual ills through their influence, and is not able to achieve any remarkable success in illumining and purifying souls. That is why Jesus, who healed those afflicted with physical ailments with this method, was not able to achieve any noticeable success in impressing hearts with guidance and the Unity of God and steadfastness of faith. But the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be

upon him), who did not pay any attention to physical matters, and concentrated on stimulating spiritual guidance in the hearts of his people, was most successful in purifying the souls and helped thousands of God's creatures to achieve it to the highest degree. He achieved matchless success in the spiritual reform of mankind and in bringing about inner change. The dead, whom Jesus revived by the practice '*amal-ut-tirb*', died within a few minutes, as the warmth of the spirit and its life was only temporarily stimulated in them, but those who were spiritually revived by our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) shall live forever.

My designation of mesmerism as '*amal-ut-tirb*', in which Jesus had acquired some proficiency, is under Divine direction. God Almighty disclosed to me that this art is '*amal-ut-tirb*', and it is concerning this that I received the revelation:

هَذَا هُوَ التَّرْبُ الَّذِي لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

'This is the *tirb* of whose reality people are unaware.'

It must be realized that God Almighty is Unique in respect of every one of His attributes and does not associate anyone in them. The emphasis which the clear and unambiguous verses of the Holy Qur'ān give to this subject is well known. As Allah, hallowed be His name, says:

الَّذِي لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَهُ يَتَّخِذُ وَلَدًا وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ شَرِيكٌ
فِي الْمُلْكِ وَخَلَقَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ فَقَدْ رُءَاهُ تَقْدِيرًا ۝ وَاتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِهِ آلِهَةً لَا
يَخْلُقُونَ شَيْئًا وَهُمْ يُخْلَقُونَ وَلَا يَمْلِكُونَ لِأَنفُسِهِمْ ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا وَلَا
يَمْلِكُونَ مَوْتًا وَلَا حَيَاةً وَلَا نُشُورًا ۝¹⁸⁶

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¹⁸⁶ Al-Furqān, 25:3-4 [Publisher]

That is: ‘God is He Who alone owns the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He has no partner. He has no son nor has he any partner in His kingdom. He has created everything and has placed limits on their bodies, their power, and their life. The pagans have taken gods—beside that True God—who have not created anything and are themselves created. They do not determine any harm or benefit for themselves and do not control life nor death nor resurrection.’

God Almighty has here clearly affirmed that there is no Creator besides Him. In another verse, it is stated that the whole world together cannot create even a fly. Then it is stated that no one beside Him has control over death and life and resurrection. Had it been His way to associate any one of His creatures in these attributes, He would have made an exception of them and would not have taught His absolute Unity.

It may be asked why then has Allah the Glorious, employed the expression, ‘*You will create*’ with reference to Jesus. The answer would be that this is a metaphoric use of the expression as in the verse:

¹⁸⁷ فَتَبَارَكَ اللَّهُ أَحْسَنُ الْخَالِقِينَ

Without a doubt God Almighty is the true Creator and those who fashion toys of clay or wood are also creators but only metaphorically so, because their works are mere show and have no reality.

If it is asked why it is not permissible for Jesus^{as} to have fashioned birds under Divine direction which could fly by his breathing into them, by way of a miracle, the an-

¹⁸⁷ ‘So blessed be Allah, the Best of creators.’—Al-Mu’minūn, 23:15
[Publisher]

swer is that God does not make anyone the master of death and life or harm and benefit. Prophets seek miracles through prayer and supplication and do not possess the power to work miracles like a man has the power to use his hands and feet. Thus the power of creation is one of those Divine attributes that are never bestowed upon man and is distinct from a miracle. The essence of a miracle is that God Almighty, in order to demonstrate the truth and honour of a Prophet and the powerlessness and helplessness of his opponents, manifests something that is extraordinary or beyond imagination by His special design or in response to the prayer or supplication of the Prophet. But it is done in a manner which is not inconsistent with His attributes of Unity, Holiness and Perfection and which does not permit of anyone else's power or design.

It is not a miracle that God Almighty should invest a human being with the power of fashioning birds of clay, which would become real birds with flesh and bones and blood and all the limbs of animals when he breathes into them. If God Almighty can make someone the agent of His attribute of creation in the case of birds, He can also bestow the full agency of His attribute of creation. In this event, partnership in Divine attributes would become permissible, though only under His direction and permission, and the comprehension of the true Creator would become doubtful in the presence of such creators whose creations would become indistinguishable from God's. This would not be a form of miracle; it would be partnership in Godhead.

Some wise people try to solve the dilemma of polytheism by asserting that the birds which Jesus created did not live for any length of time but fell down and died after a short flight. But this explanation would help only if it is held that those birds were not invested with true life but

only appeared to be alive for a short time as a result of mesmeric influence....

The Holy Qur'ān affirms that Jesus had been given the power to do these things as an exercise of his natural capacity, which is inherent in every human being. Jesus was not unique in this respect. Such capacity is being demonstrated in our own age. The miracles of Jesus were rendered bizarre and doubtful by the pool which had existed even before the birth of Jesus, and which also displayed wonders and a single dip into which bestowed healing upon all those afflicted with diseases such as paralysis, leukoderma, leprosy etc. And there were others who manifested similar extraordinary signs later on, and there was no such pool to cast doubt on their manifestations.

The belief that Jesus fashioned birds of clay and made them come alive as real birds by breathing into them, is entirely false and polytheistic. It was only an exercise of mesmeric capacity that had been developed to some degree by his spiritual propensity. It is also possible that he made use of clay from the pool that had been activated by the Holy Spirit. His miracle was only a kind of sleight of hand and the clay remained only clay like the Samaritan's calf. *Ponder over it, because this is a magnificent point; no one comprehends it except those who have been granted great wisdom.*

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 251-263, footnote].

No other Prophet has had so many fictitious miracles attributed to him, as have been attributed to Jesus^{as}; some ignorant ones even imagine that he had revived thousands upon thousands of the dead. The Gospels narrate a highly exaggerated statement of an occasion when all the dead buried in a graveyard, which had existed for

thousands of years, were revived and all of them walked into the city alive.

Anyone with wisdom can easily understand that despite the fact that millions of the dead who had been revived walked into the city and told their tales to their descendants and confirmed the truth of Jesus^{as}, the Jews still did not believe in him. Who would credit such hard-heartedness? Indeed, if Jesus occupied himself with reviving thousands of the dead it must be recognized that the revived ones could not all have been deaf and dumb. Some of them must have been the brothers, fathers, sons, mothers, grandmothers, grandfathers and other near relatives of those who witnessed these miracles. Thus Jesus^{as} had open to him a vast scheme for converting the disbelievers. Many of the revived dead who were related to the contemporary Jews, must have accompanied Jesus^{as}, and he must have arranged for them to deliver public addresses in a number of cities that must have been heard with great interest and eagerness. For instance, when a revived one told his audience, 'Many of you who are present here know me as I was buried by your hands. Now I have come to you after having heard from God's own tongue that Jesus is true and he has revived me'. ... This would have had a deep affect on the Jews and thousands upon thousands of them would have believed in him. But the Holy Qur'ān and the Gospels affirm that the Jews had totally rejected Jesus^{as} and that he was the least successful of the Prophets in his work of reform, and almost all the Jews considered him an impostor and a liar.

It is worth reflecting: should this have been the result of such a great supernatural miracle? When thousands of the revived dead testified to the truth of Jesus^{as} and affirmed that they had seen heaven which contained only the Christians who believed in Jesus, and that they had

seen hell which contained Jews who had denied Jesus, how could the slightest doubt remain about the truth of Jesus? If anyone was still in doubt, his ancestors who had been revived would have punished them to death proclaiming, ‘O Ye wretches! Are you still in doubt after our testimony.’ There is no doubt, therefore, that all such alleged miracles are pure fiction.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, part V, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 21, pp. 47-48]

The True Claim of Jesus

Out of the wonders that God has bestowed on me, one is that I have on several occasions met Jesus in visions—in state of complete wakefulness—and have talked to him and have inquired from him about his true claim and his teaching. It is a great thing worthy of attention, that Jesus is utterly disgusted with the doctrines of atonement, Trinity and sonship, as if these are the greatest lies that are attributed to him. This testimony of my visions is not a mere unsupported assertion on my part. Indeed, I am certain that if a seeker after truth should stay with me for a time with complete goodwill and should desire to behold Jesus in a state of vision, he can do so with the blessing of my attention and prayers and can speak to him and can procure his testimony concerning his doctrine and teachings, because I am the one in whose soul dwells the soul of Jesus by way of *burūz* [second coming.]

[Toḥfah-e-Qaişariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 12, p. 273]

I have beheld Jesus^{as} several times in my dreams and have met him in visions. He ate with me from the same dish. On one occasion, I asked him about the misguidance in which his people have become involved. He was completely over-awed and glorified God Almighty and proclaimed His Holiness. He pointed to the earth and

said that he was nothing more than a man made out of clay, and was completely innocent of that which was attributed to him. I found him to be a courteous and humble person.

[Nūr-ul-Haq, part I, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 8, pp. 56-57]

Review of the Christian Faith

When I find that the Christian faith lacks altogether all three methods of the comprehension of God, I wonder on what basis Christians support their worship of Jesus. How unfortunate is it for them that the gates of heaven are closed to them, reason rejects them and they have not available to them documentary proof from the continuous teachings of the previous Prophets, and yet they have no fear of God. A wise person should adopt a religion whose teachings on the principles of comprehension of the Divine should be acceptable to all, and which should be supported by reason and against which the gates of heaven should not be closed. Reflection shows that the Christian faith is bereft of all these three qualities. Its method of comprehension of the Divine is so strange that neither the scriptures of the Jews nor any other heavenly book has taught it. As for the testimony of reason it is enough to point out that the more the Europeans become acquainted with dialectical methods, the greater becomes their mockery of Christian doctrines.

Logical propositions are of universal application as they are determined on the basis of universally accepted principles. Therefore, if a philosopher is convinced that Jesus is God, he must then hold that millions of gods have appeared in the past and can appear in the future, which is absurd.

As regards the heavenly signs, if all Christian clerics

were to beseech Jesus for a heavenly sign throughout their lives, they would not be given any, as Jesus is not God. He is a humble human being and would be unaware of their supplication. Even if he were aware of it, what could he do?....

If on the Day of Judgement, Jesus was to confess that he was not God and inquire from them why they had attributed Godhead to him, what will they do and to whom will they turn? God Almighty has established four witnesses to confound the Christians:

1. The Jews who have borne witness for more than three thousand five hundred years that they were never instructed in the doctrine of Trinity, nor had any of their Prophets predicted that God or a son of God in the true sense would appear on earth.
2. The followers of John the Baptist who are still found in Syria and who have throughout believed that Jesus was a human being, a Prophet and disciple of John the Baptist.
3. The Unitarian sect of the Christians which has been repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and whose members held a discussion with the Trinitarian sect of Christianity in the third century under the direction of the Roman Emperor, and who were held to be in the right and the Emperor had sided with them.
4. The Holy Prophet of Islām (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the Holy Qur'ān both of whom have affirmed that Jesus, son of Mary, certainly was not God or the son of God, but was only a Prophet.

Moreover, thousands of the righteous have testified under Divine guidance that Jesus, son of Mary, was a

humble creature of God and His Prophet. God Almighty has raised me as a witness against the Christians and has commanded me to proclaim that the deification of the son of Mary is a false doctrine that amounts to infidelity. He has also honoured me with His converse....

O Christians! be sure that Jesus, son of Mary, is not God. Do not wrong your souls by attributing the greatness of God to one of His creatures. Our hearts tremble at hearing that you call on a weak and helpless creature as if he were God. Turn to the True God so that you may achieve good and may receive salvation.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 53-55]

Jesus did not Claim to be God

The deification of the son of Mary is a terrible wrong. He is only a man and a Prophet in the Mosaic dispensation. You have not seen him but I have seen him many times. None of you knows him but I know him. He is a honourable man who acknowledges the greatness of Moses^{as} and believes sincerely in the greatness of our lord and master Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and is, like us, devoted to him. Were he to appear in the world at this time and find that he has been deified and is believed to have atoned for the sins of mankind, he would be so ashamed of this false glorification that he would be ready to suffer death and would supplicate God for forgiveness. What proof have you of his godhead? Do his words or the words of his disciples indicate his godhead? Even if they did, this would be an empty claim unsupported by any proof. This claim cannot be supported even from the Gospels. Nowhere do the Gospels state that the son of Mary ever claimed to be God. Indeed, when the Jews confronted him on one

occasion with such a claim on his part, he repudiated it.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, p. 307]

In John, chapter 10 verses 30-37, Jesus is reported to have said that he was no different from other righteous ones who had been called gods or sons of God in the scriptures. The Jews having heard that Jesus called himself the son of God, charged him with blasphemy, started throwing stones at him, and were much infuriated. What should have been the attitude of Jesus when the Jews attempted to stone him because he called himself the son of God, which in their estimation amounted to blasphemy? How could he have either disclaimed or established his claim? He could have adopted one of two attitudes. If he was truly the son of God, he should have answered, 'My claim is true. I am indeed the son of God and I have two proofs in support of my claim. One is that in your books it is written that the Messiah is the son of God, rather he is God Himself, and he is All-Powerful, knows the unseen and does whatever he wishes. If you doubt this, bring your books, and I will show you the proof of my Godhead from these books. You charge me with blasphemy because of your misunderstanding and lack of knowledge of the Scripture. Your books proclaim me God and All-Powerful then why do you say that I blaspheme? You should instead worship me because I am God.'

His second proof should have been, 'Come and behold the signs of Godhead in me. As God Almighty has created the sun and the moon and the planets and the earth, I too have created a portion of the earth or a planet or some other part of the universe. I can even now create something of that kind and demonstrate my Godhead. I have more power and strength than is manifested in the

miracles of the Prophets.’ It would also have been appropriate for him to furnish his opponents with a detailed list of his works as God and to challenge them whether Moses^{as} or any other Prophet of Israel had performed such works. Had he furnished such proof the Jews would have been confounded and the Scribes and Pharisees would have fallen prostrate before him and would have confessed, ‘Surely, you are God and we were in error. You have created a sun in contrast with the sun which has been shining from the beginning and which illumines the day, and you have created a moon which appears at night and illumines it with a beautiful light. This we have witnessed. You have also placed before us the proof of your Godhead from our recognized books. How can we then dare to deny that you are God?’ But Jesus set forth none of these proofs. All he did was to offer these statements. Please ponder over them:

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shown you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, ‘For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy and because that thou being a man makest thyself God.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods?’ If he called them gods unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?¹⁸⁸

Now, it is worthy of reflection whether for repelling the charge of blasphemy and for establishing that he was

¹⁸⁸ John, 10:31-36 in the New King James Version. [Publisher]

truly the son of God the only appropriate answer was, ‘If I have called myself the son of God, how have I offended you considering that some of those who appeared before me were called gods.’

Deputy ‘Abdullāh Ātham says, that Jesus was frightened by their mob and concealed the true answer and took refuge in subterfuge. But I ask: ‘Is such an attitude worthy of the Prophets who are always ready to lay down their lives in the cause of Allah the Glorious?’ It is said in the Holy Qur’ān concerning them:

الَّذِينَ يُبْرِئُونَ رُسُلَ اللَّهِ وَيَخْشَوْنَ اللَّهَ وَلَا يَخْشَوْنَ أَحَدًا إِلَّا اللَّهَ¹⁸⁹

This means that: ‘The true Messengers of Allah, who convey His message, do not fear anyone in conveying the messages of Allah.’ Then how is it that Jesus who called himself God Almighty was afraid of the helpless Jews?

It is thus clear that Jesus^{as} never claimed to be God or son of God in the true sense. He claimed to be in the same category as those who had been given such titles metaphorically and confessed that his claim was of the same kind....

Confession of Human Weaknesses by Jesus

This is not all. On several occasions he confessed his human deficiencies. When he was asked to indicate when the Judgement would take place, he confessed his ignorance and declared that no one knew of that hour except God Himself.

It is obvious that knowledge is a characteristic of the soul and not of the body. If the soul of Jesus was Divine and

¹⁸⁹ Al-Aḥzāb, 33:40 [Publisher]

he was God Himself, then how is it that he confessed his lack of knowledge of that Hour? Does God Almighty forget His knowledge? It is written in Matthew 19:16:

And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Matthew 20:20 says:

Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons ... She saith unto him, Grant that these my true sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left ... But Jesus answered and said ... to sit on my right hand, and on my left is not mine to give.

Then how was it that he was All-Powerful? Does the All-Powerful ever lose His power? When there is so much inconsistency in respect of his attributes, that his disciples considered him All-Powerful and he denied it, then what credence can be given to the prophecies when he in whose support they are cited denies being All-Powerful? Matthew 26:38¹⁹⁰ records that Jesus prayed throughout the night for his deliverance and supplicated God in great sorrow and agony that if possible the cup may be taken away from him and also asked his disciples to supplicate on his behalf....Yet his prayer was not accepted and that which was written came to pass. Had he been All-Powerful his power and authority would first have benefited himself. Otherwise it was useless for others to expect anything from him.

[Jang-e-Muqaddas, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 133-136]

¹⁹⁰ Mathews 26:39 in the King James version. [Publisher]

True Meaning of ‘Son of God’

Those who were perfectly righteous have been called sons of God in the previous scriptures. This does not mean that they were actually the sons of God; such a thing would be blasphemous, as God has no sons or daughters. Such expressions only mean that the reflection of God had been displayed in the clear mirrors of those righteous personages. The reflection of a person in a mirror is, metaphorically speaking, his son; for as a son is born of the father, a reflection is born of the original. When a reflection of Divine manifestations appears in a heart that is absolutely pure without any kind of stain, the reflection is metaphorically like a son of the original. That is why Israel was called the first begotten of God in the Torah.

If Christians had confined themselves to describing Jesus, son of Mary, as the son of God just as Abraham^{as}, Isaac^{as}, Ishmael^{as}, Jacob^{as}, Joseph^{as}, Moses^{as}, David^{as}, Solomon^{as} and others were metaphorically called sons of God in the Scripture, there would have been no objection to it. Just as these Prophets were called sons of God, so is the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) metaphorically called God in some prophecies. The truth is that all these descriptions are metaphorical; none of those Prophets were sons of God, nor was the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) God. Such expressions abound in scriptures as indications of God’s love.

When a person becomes so devoted in his love for God Almighty that his self disappears altogether, such expressions are applied to him since his ego ceases to exist altogether; as God says in the Holy Qur’ān:

قُلْ يُحِبُّونِي الَّذِينَ أَسْرَفُوا عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ لَا تَقْنَطُوا
 مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوبَ جَمِيعًا¹⁹¹

That is: ‘Tell them, O my servants! Despair not of the mercy of Allah; surely Allah will forgive all sins.’

In this verse, ‘O my servants’ has been used in place of ‘O servants of Allah’ while mankind are the servants of God and not the servants of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) The expression has been used here in the metaphorical sense.

[Haqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 22, pp. 65-66]

Christian Doctrine about the Son of Mary

The Christian description of their god is that he was an Israeli male, son of Mary daughter of Jacob. He passed out of this life at the age of thirty-two. When we consider how before his arrest he supplicated throughout the night for deliverance and failed to achieve it, was ignominiously apprehended and was nailed to the cross and died bewailing, ‘Eli, Eli’, we tremble to think that a person whose supplications were rejected by God and who died in extreme humiliation should be held up as Almighty God. Imagine how Pilate sent Jesus into the custody of Herod after he was arrested. How is it compatible with his divinity that, with his hands and feet in chains, he was taken as a prisoner to Galilee in the custody of a few soldiers; and in this wretched condition, he was transferred from one jurisdiction to another. Pilate wanted to release him on seeing some wonder of his, but he was not able to show any such thing. Ultimately he was handed over in custody to the Jews who despatched him speedily.

¹⁹¹ Al-Zumar, 39:54 [Publisher]

Our readers should reflect whether these are the signs of the real and true God! Can any clear conscience reconcile itself to the situation that the Creator of heaven and earth Who possesses unlimited power and authority should become so weak and unfortunate and contemptible that wicked people may rule Him out of existence with their hands? If anyone should worship such a god and should put his trust in him, he is free to do so, but the truth is that if the power and authority of the god of the Christians is compared to that of the permeshwar of Āryās, it would amount to nothing at all. The fictitious permeshwar of the Āryās, though he has no power to create anything, is said to be able at least to put things together, but the god of the Christians was not proved to have even that ability. The Jews having nailed him to the cross told him that if he could save himself they would believe in him. This was not a great task but he was not able to do even this; all he had to do was to join his soul to his body. Afterwards it was declared that he had revived in the tomb. But those who made this affirmation forgot that the Jews had demanded that he should revive himself before their eyes. As he did not come back to life before their eyes, nor did he meet them after his revival in the tomb, what proof is there for the Jews, and indeed for any researcher, that he had truly come back to life?

[Me'yār-ul-Madhāhib, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 468-470]

The sum and substance of the circumstances of the son of Mary, shorn of vain and senseless praise, is that he was a humble creature and was one of the Prophets who were subject to the law of Moses^{as} and was a follower of that great Prophet but had not himself the same status. That is to say, his teaching was subsidiary to that of Moses^{as} and he did not have an independent status. According to the

Gospels, he confessed that he was neither good, nor a knower of the unseen, nor powerful, but only a humble creature. The Gospels also show that before his arrest he supplicated throughout the night for deliverance and beseeched that his prayer may be heard. He was tempted by Satan like any other humble creature. It is thus obvious that having been born through the normal channel of birth, which signifies filth and excrement, he endured hunger, thirst, pain and illness over a period. On one occasion, when suffering from hunger, he approached a fig tree which proved to be fruitless and was frustrated without being able to create a few figs for his sustenance. In short, having spent his days in such conditions and having endured such afflictions, he died, according to the Christians, and was removed from this world. So we enquire whether God Almighty should possess such defective qualities and should be called Holy and Glorious while suffering from such faults and deficiencies? Also, how is it possible that of the five children born to Mary, only one became the son of God and even God Himself, and the remaining four were not bestowed any part of Godhead?

One would have thought that, contrary to the normal rule that a human being is born of a human being and a donkey is born of a donkey, if God can be born of a human creature, then no creature should be born from the same womb; all the children born from it should be gods so that the holy womb should be safeguarded against giving birth to creatures and should be solely a mine for the birth of gods. According to this speculation it was necessary that the brothers and sisters of Jesus should have partaken somewhat of Godhead and the mother of the five should have been honoured as the God of Gods

because all five of them derived all their spiritual and physical faculties from her. The Christians have invented all sorts of undue praise for the son of Mary and yet they could not conceal his defects and deficiencies, and so brazenly pronounced him the son of God.

Although the Jews and the Christians, according to their strange scriptures, are all the sons of God, indeed, according to one verse, they are themselves God, yet we observe that the Buddhists have done better than them in their inventions and their impostures. Having acclaimed Buddha as God, they did not ascribe to him a birth through the normal filthy channel or that he had been reared on any impure nourishment. They believe that Buddha was born through the mouth of his mother. Alas for the Christians that though they forged many lies it did not occur to them to ascribe his birth also to the mouth so that they could have safeguarded their god from being mixed with urine and other impurities. Nor did it occur to them to safeguard him against death, which is the utter negation of Godhead. Nor did they think of excising from the Gospels all references to the confessions of Jesus that he was neither good nor wise nor knower of the unseen, nor had he come of his own will, nor did he possess absolute power, nor could he ensure acceptance of his prayers and that he was a humble human being who had been sent by the Master and Lord of the universe. All such references, therefore, should be expunged from the Gospels.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 441-443, footnote 11]

We have repeatedly admonished you O' Christians that worship of Jesus is no less than idol worship or the worship of Rama, and that the son of Mary has no superiority over the son of Kaushallia; but have you ever paid atten-

tion to our admonitions? You attack all other religions but have you ever reflected over your triune God? Have you ever considered how one who possessed all greatness was afflicted like an ordinary human being, and how the creator was beaten and maltreated by his own creatures? Can it be contemplated that humble creatures should flog their creator, should spit in his face, should seize him and nail him to the cross and he should be helpless in their hands; and that, being God, he should be subject to death? Can it be imagined that there should be three physical gods, one whose physical image was Adam, another Jesus, and the third a pigeon, and that of the three one should have a son and two should be without issue? Can it be contemplated that God should walk behind Satan who should require him to prostrate himself before him and tempt him by offering to bestow the world upon him? Can it be understood that a person with God dwelling in his bones, supplicated throughout the night and yet his supplication was rejected? Is it not surprising that the Jewish scriptures are cited in support of the godhead of Jesus while such a doctrine is an anathema to the Jews, which they repudiate emphatically, and none of their sects subscribes to the doctrine of Trinity? Had the Jews been taught this doctrine by Moses^{as} and all the Prophets after him, how was it possible that all of them, divided into so many sects, should have forgotten this teaching?

Is it not worth considering that from the earliest times there existed a Christian Unitarian sect, which was in existence at the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It testifies that the unholy doctrine of Trinity emerged only in the third century? Even today there are hundreds of thousands of Unitarians in Europe and America who continue to pub-

lish books in support of their doctrine. In view of all this, and as the Christian missionaries still persist in their vile affirmation, is there not the need for Divine Judgement so that those who base themselves on falsehood may be ruined? Those who adhere to falsehood will now take to their heels and will seek refuge in false pretences.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 41-42]

Jesus as a Prophet

One strong argument in support of the truth of a Prophet is that he should bring about spiritual reform on a large scale. We find very little of this in the life of Jesus. He had twelve disciples and their example is most discouraging. They professed great devotion towards Jesus but their example was unmatched in treachery and cowardice. Did it behove a disciple to betray his Prophet and beloved leader to his enemies in return for thirty pieces of silver? What was it that compelled his principal disciple Peter to abuse and curse him to his face? Was it appropriate for his disciples to desert him and disappear as soon as he was arrested? Should this be the attitude of those whose beloved Prophet is apprehended on a capital charge? Afterwards creature worshippers invented all sorts of stories and elevated Jesus to heaven; but the record of their lack of faith is still preserved in the Gospels.

Thus the proof of the truth of a righteous Prophet is not to be found in the case of Jesus. Had the Holy Qur'ān not confirmed his Prophethood, we could not have counted him as a true Prophet. Can one who taught that he was the son of God, and even God Himself, and that he didn't have to worship anyone and his intelligence was so defective as to make him imagine that people would be delivered from sin by his suicide, be considered for one

moment as a wise person who follows the straight path? But praise be to Allah that the Holy Qur'ān has revealed to us that all these are calumnies against the son of Mary. There is no trace at all of the Trinity in the Gospels. The expression 'son of God', which had been applied to thousands of people from Adam^{as} downwards in the scriptures, was applied to Jesus as well. Later, it was exaggerated and was seized upon for the deification of Jesus. He never claimed that he was God nor did he ever express a desire for suicide. If he had done so, his name would have been erased from the list of the righteous in accordance with the Word of God. It is also difficult to believe that these shameful lies had their root in the erroneous thinking of the disciples. Though, according to the Gospel, they were men of average intelligence and could easily fall into error, yet we cannot reconcile ourselves to the notion that having kept company with a Prophet they were capable of propagating such nonsense.

The truth appears to be—and this can be gathered from a study of the writings that are complementary to the Gospels—that all this was a device of Paul who had recourse to deep cunning like political adventurers.

The son of Mary, who is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān, was bound by the eternal guidance that had been prescribed for mankind from the beginning. Whatever doubts and suspicions the Gospels may raise concerning his Prophethood, the testimony of the Holy Qur'ān is enough to establish its truth. *Peace be on him who follows the true guidance.*

[Nūr-ul-Qur'ān, part 1, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 370-372]

Absurdity of the Doctrine of Trinity

The doctrine of Trinity is a strange doctrine indeed. Has anyone ever heard of three perfect entities which are at

the same time one: three separate and perfect gods combined as one perfect God? The Christian faith is a strange compound of error and misguidance, and despite all these darkensses all possibility of guidance through revelation and inspiration is excluded for the future. Therefore, the errors of the Gospels cannot, according to the Christians, be corrected through new revelations, inasmuch as they believe that there can be no revelation in future. Now their whole reliance is upon individual speculation, which is not free from darkness and ignorance.

The Gospels are a collection of countless absurdities: like the deification of a humble creature, his crucifixion as atonement for the sins of others and his condemnation to hell for three days. They deify Jesus and yet attribute weakness and falsehood to him. There are several statements in the Gospels, which prove Jesus to be a liar. For instance, he promised a thief that he would sup with him that day in heaven and then, contrary to his promise, he chose to go to hell and to abide therein for three days. It is also recorded in the Gospels that Satan led Jesus to various spots to try him. Strange it is that though Jesus became God, he could not escape being tried by Satan and that Satan had the daring to try God. This philosophy of the Gospels is beyond comprehension. If Satan had in truth come to Jesus, he was afforded a good opportunity of exhibiting Satan to the Jews as the Jews were persistently denying his Prophethood.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 348-349]

Be sure that the True God is the One to Whom the Holy Qur'ān calls us. Beside Him there is nothing but worship of man or the worship of stones. Without a doubt Jesus, son of Mary, has also drunk of the fountain of which we drink and has eaten of the fruit of which we eat, but these

things have nothing to do with Godhead or sonship of God. The Christians have invented a device for making Jesus a limited God, which is that they have made him accursed. If he did not become accursed, his Godhead would be useless and his being the son of God was in vain. Yet according to all the lexicographers the meaning of being accursed is that the heart should be disgusted with God, should lose all faith, should turn away from truth, should become an enemy of God, should become wholly bleak and worse than dogs and swine and apes, as is testified to by the Torah. Can it be imagined that even for a second Jesus ceased to be a loved one of God? Did his heart ever become disgusted with God? Did he ever think of discarding his faith? Did he ever become the enemy of God and God became his enemy? If nothing of this sort happened, then what portion did he suffer of the curse upon which the whole doctrine of salvation has been constructed? Does not the Torah affirm that he who dies on the cross is accursed? If he who is crucified is accursed then no doubt that curse would have fallen on Jesus as well. But it is the unanimous view that curse connotes distance from God and disgust with Him. To be afflicted with misfortune does not mean that one is accursed. Curse means turning away from God, hating God and even becoming His enemy. The accursed one is the title of Satan. Then reflect whether it is permissible for a righteous one to be considered an enemy of God and disgusted with God, should be designated as Satan and one of whom God is an enemy? It would have been better for the Christians if they had accepted hell for themselves and had not condemned a chosen one of God as accursed and Satan. Cursed is the salvation that can only be achieved by declaring righteous ones to be faithless and Satans.

Jesus not Accursed

The Holy Qur'ān has proclaimed the truth that Jesus did not die on the cross and did not become accursed. This is also borne out by the Gospels inasmuch as Jesus described his own case as resembling that of the Prophet Jonas; and every Christian knows that Jonas did not die in the belly of the whale. If Jesus lay dead in the sepulchre, what resemblance would he have with Jonas who was kept alive in the belly of the whale? It is also known that after deliverance from the cross Jesus exhibited his wounds to the disciples. If he had been bestowed a glorious body after death, how was it that he still retained the wounds received by his previous body? Had there been some deficiency left in the glory and, if so, how can it be expected that those injuries would be healed till the Judgement Day?

All these are senseless tales on which the beam of God-head has been rested; but the time approaches fast, rather it has already come, when God Almighty will blow away all these tales like the carding of wool.

[Sirāj-e-Munīr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, pp. 64-65]

It is the agreed doctrine of all Christians that Jesus, having been crucified, became accursed for three days, and this curse is what their salvation is based on. This doctrine is open to so serious an objection whereby the whole doctrinal structure of the Trinity, atonement and forgiveness of sins is utterly falsified and disappears. If anyone is interested in maintaining the justification of these doctrines, let him come forth and answer this objection, otherwise this entire structure will fall and the whole bundle of Christian doctrines will be crushed. Then neither Trinity nor atonement nor the forgiveness of sins will survive. The entire doctrine of the cross will

be demolished by the power of God.

In order to facilitate appreciation of this objection, we proceed to set forth the meaning of *la'nat* [curse.] In *Li-sān-ul-'Arab*, which is an old Arabic lexicon and is an Islamic publication, in *Qaṭr-ul-Muḥīt*, *Muḥīt* and *Agrab-ul-Mavārid* which have been compiled by two Christian lexicographers and have been recently published in Beirut, and in all other lexicons, the meaning of *la'nat* is set out as follows:

اللَّعْنُ: الْإِبْعَادُ وَالطَّرْدُ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ وَمِنَ اللَّهِ وَمِنَ الْخَلْقِ وَمِنَ
أَبْعَدَهُ اللَّهُ لَمْ تَلْحَقْهُ رَحْمَتُهُ وَخَلَّدَ فِي الْعَذَابِ - وَاللَّعِينُ
الشَّيْطَانُ الْمَمْسُوحُ - وَقَالَ الشَّمَاخُ مَقَامَ الذَّنْبِ كَالرَّجُلِ اللَّعِينِ¹⁹²

An accursed one is he who is deprived of all good and of the mercy of God and the comprehension of God and is condemned to everlasting torment, that is to say, his heart is wholly deprived of all good and becomes Satan and acquires the qualities of swine and apes. The poet Shammākh calls an accursed one a wolf because his inner self has become corrupted.

When it is said that a person is under God's curse everyone understands that he has become truly vicious and faithless and a Satan in the estimation of God and that God is disgusted with him and he has turned away from God.... We wish to inquire most respectfully from Christian clerics if it is true that such a curse, with all its characteristics, had been imposed by God Almighty on Jesus and that under this curse he had fallen under the wrath of God and become black-hearted and had turned away from God? In my estimation such a person who designates a chosen one of God

¹⁹² The word *la'n* is common in Arabic and Hebrew. [Author]

as accursed, that is to say, as black-hearted, disgusted with God and of satanic character, is himself accursed. Can it be said that a loved one of God had truly become accursed which means bitter enmity towards God....

To designate a dear one of God as Satan is a satanic act. I cannot conceive that any decent person would for a second apply all these designations to Jesus. If this is not permissible then the whole structure of atonement falls to the ground and the doctrine of Trinity is demolished and the cross is broken. Is there anyone in the world who can challenge this objection?

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 333-335]

The Christians believe that Jesus (peace be upon him), having been apprehended in consequence of the treachery of Judas Iscariot, was crucified and, having been resurrected, ascended bodily to heaven. But a careful study of the Gospels discloses that this doctrine is altogether false. In Matthew 12:40, it is written:

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

We know that Jonas did not die in the belly of the whale; at the most he suffered unconsciousness. The scripture shows that by Divine grace Jonas remained alive in the belly of the whale and emerged therefrom alive and was in the end accepted by his people. If Jesus (peace be upon him) died in the belly of the whale¹⁹³, what resemblance would there be between him and Jonas?

The truth is that as Jesus was a true Prophet and believed

¹⁹³ This is a misprint in the first edition, the word 'whale' should be read 'earth'. [Publisher]

that God, to whom he was dear, would safeguard him against an accursed death, he had, under Divine revelation, prophesied in this manner in order to convey that he would not die on the cross but would become unconscious like the Prophet Jonas. In this prophecy Jesus had also indicated that after emerging from the belly of the earth he would meet his people and would be honoured by them as Jonas had been honoured by his people. This prophecy was also fulfilled, inasmuch as after emerging from the belly of the earth, Jesus travelled to his people who were settled in Kashmir, Tibet and other Eastern countries. These were the ten lost tribes of Israel which had been captured from Samaria by Salamendor, King of Assyria, seven hundred and twenty-one years earlier, and who had migrated towards India and had settled in various countries.

It was necessary that Jesus should have undertaken this journey because the ultimate purpose of his Prophethood was to meet the lost tribes who were settled in India and other countries. They were indeed the lost tribes of Israel because after they had settled in these countries they had given up the religion of their ancestors and most of them had become Buddhists, and, in course of time, they had become idol worshippers....

Moreover deliverance from the cross was also necessary for Jesus because scripture says that he who dies upon the rood is accursed. The meaning of curse is such that its application to Jesus for even a moment would be the height of cruelty and injustice. Curse is related to the heart. A person is called accursed when his heart, being alienated from God, becomes black and is bereft of His mercy, becomes a stranger to His love, is emptied completely of His comprehension, becomes blind and is filled with the poison of misguidance like Satan; and not a ray

of the love and understanding of God survives in it. It is cut asunder from all faith and loyalty. Rancour, hatred, aversion and enmity are generated between it and God, so much so that God becomes its enemy and it becomes the enemy of God; and it becomes averse to God and God becomes averse to it. In short, curse means to become the heir of Satan in all his qualities. That is why Satan is designated the accursed....Can we say that the heart of Jesus had ever turned away from God and had denied God and had become disgusted with God and God had become his enemy? Can we imagine that the heart of Jesus at any time felt that it had become disgusted with God and had become His enemy and was sunk in the darkness of disbelief and denial? If the heart of Jesus never felt so and was ever filled with the light of love and comprehension, then ponder, O wise ones, how can we say that it had become subject not to one but to a thousand curses, with all that they entail. God forbid, certainly not. Then how can we say that Jesus became accursed?...

Such a notion is not only inconsistent with the status of Jesus^{as} as a Prophet and a Messenger but is also inconsistent with his claim of perfection and purity and love and comprehension of God, which is mentioned time and again in the Gospels. A perusal of the Gospels shows that Jesus^{as} affirmed, 'I am the light of the world'; 'I am the guide'; 'I have a relationship of deep love with God'; 'I have been bestowed a holy birth by Him'; 'I am the beloved son of God'. Then, despite these inalienable and holy relationships with God, how can the concept of curse be attributed to his heart? Jesus certainly did not die on the cross and his heart was safeguarded against the unholy condition of being accursed. If he did not die on the cross, he also did not ascend bodily to heaven, for

such ascension was a part of the whole project of his crucifixion. If he did not become accursed nor was committed to hell for three days, his bodily ascension to heaven, which was part of this whole drama, also falls to the ground. The Gospels furnish other evidence to the same effect, which is as follows: Jesus is reported to have said:

But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. (Matthew, 26:32)

This shows that after emerging from the sepulchre Jesus went to Galilee and not to heaven. The expression 'after rising again' cannot be construed to mean resurrection after death. Jesus employed this expression in anticipation of the notions of the Jews and the common people concerning his end on the cross. Also such an expression would not be inept with reference to a person who was nailed to the cross and appeared to be dead while he was unconscious. If a person, on being delivered from such a situation, claims to have risen from the dead, it would be no exaggeration on his part....

This shows that on emerging from the sepulchre Jesus proceeded towards Galilee. It is written in the Gospel of Mark, that he was seen walking towards Galilee and met the eleven disciples when they were at supper and showed them his hands and feet, which bore marks of wounds. They had imagined that he was a spirit, whereupon he asked them to touch him and see that a spirit could not have flesh and bones as he had. He took from them a piece of broiled fish and honeycomb and ate before them. See Mark, 16:14 and Luke, 24:39-42. These verses show clearly that Jesus did not ascend to heaven but on emerging from the sepulchre went to Galilee in his normal body and clothes. Had he risen from the dead, his glorious body would not have borne the marks of the injuries inflicted

upon him on the cross, nor would he have been in need of nourishment. If despite his having risen from the dead he was still in need of food, he must need food in heaven also.

The cross was not like the modern gallows deliverance from which is almost impossible. In crucifixion no rope was put round the neck of the offender, nor was he suspended after being pushed from a platform. He was only nailed to the cross through his hands and feet and, in case it was not the intention to kill him, he was taken down after one or two days and his bones were not broken. If death was intended, he was left on the cross for two or three days without food or drink and was exposed to the heat of the sun. Thereafter his bones were broken and he died as a result of all this torment.

In the case of Jesus^{as}, the grace and mercy of God safeguarded him against all such torment as might have ended his life. The Gospels show that Jesus^{as} did not remain on the cross for three days exposed to the sun without food or drink, nor were his bones broken. He remained on the cross for just about two hours. The grace and mercy of God so ordained that he was put upon the cross late on Friday when only a brief part of the day was left. The next day was the Sabbath and it was also the day of Passover and it was forbidden in the Jewish law to leave anyone on the cross on the night of the Sabbath, which began with sunset on Friday. This was the natural juxtaposition of the events. Then God Almighty caused a storm to arise at the sixth hour after midday, which darkened the earth and lasted for three hours. (Mark, 15:33.) The Jews were afraid lest in the darkness the sun might set and the Sabbath begin and they might be held guilty of breach of the Sabbath and become liable to punishment. So they took down the body of Jesus from the

cross and also the bodies of the two thieves.

Another heavenly intervention that occurred was that when Pilate sat in the Judgement seat his wife sent him word:

Have you nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. (Matthew, 27:19)

The appearance of the angel to the wife of Pilate in her dream was a sure sign that it was God's design not to let Jesus suffer death on the cross....

Another piece of evidence furnished by the Gospels in support of the deliverance of Jesus from death on the cross is his long journey to Galilee, which he undertook after emerging from the sepulchre. On Sunday morning he first met Mary Magdalene who immediately notified the disciples that Jesus was alive, but they did not believe her. Then he was seen by two of the disciples who were going into the country. Then he appeared to the eleven when they were at supper and rebuked them over their lack of faith and their hard-heartedness. See Mark 16:9-14. When Jesus met the two disciples near Emmaus, which is at a distance of three or four miles from Jerusalem, he desired to go forward but they stopped him to spend the night with them and he supped with them. See Luke, 24:13-31. It is thus obvious that all these incidents like eating and drinking and sleeping and going on a long journey to Galilee, a distance of seventy miles from Jerusalem, all of which are relevant to a mortal body, were utterly inconsistent with a glorious body with which Jesus is imagined to have been invested after death. Despite the many changes that have found their way in the different accounts of the Gospels due to

prejudiced thinking, it appears clearly that Jesus did meet his disciples in his corporeal and mortal body and undertook a long journey on foot all the way to Galilee, showed his wounds to the disciples, supped with them and spent the night in their company. We shall prove later that he also treated his wounds with an ointment.

Here one must pause and consider as to how it was that Jesus, after being invested with a glorious and eternal body with which he was to sit eternally on the right hand of God Almighty, and which should have been exempt from the need of food and drink and should have been free from every stain and pain and deficiency and should have reflected the glory of God the Eternal, he was still bearing the marks of the wounds suffered on the cross, which were bleeding and hurting him, and for which an ointment had been prepared. This glorious and immortal body, which should have endured through eternity secure, faultless, perfect and unchangeable, was so full of defects. Indeed, Jesus himself showed his flesh and bones to his disciples....

Thus without a doubt the truth is that Jesus did not die on the cross, nor was he invested with a new glorious body. He had become unconscious and appeared to have died, but Divine grace so ordained that the sepulchre, in which he was placed, was not like the graves in this country. It was a commodious, ventilated chamber with a window. It was customary with the Jews at that time to build such chambers beforehand and place corpses in them when the need arose....

Of the testimonies contained in the Gospel is the one concerning the statement of Pilate recorded in Mark, which reads as follows:

And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation ... Joseph of Arimathea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead. (Mark, 15:42-44)

From this, we are led to conclude that, soon after Jesus was put on the cross, doubt was expressed about his death by one who knew from experience how long it took for a man to die on the cross.

Of the testimonies contained in the Gospel, is the one which we reproduce below:

... because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day, (for that Sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers and break the legs of the first and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was dead already, they break not his legs: but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. (John, 19:31-34)

These verses clearly show that, in order to put an end to the life of a crucified person, it was the practice in those days to keep him on the cross for several days and then to break his bones. But in the case of Jesus, his bones were purposely not broken and he must have been taken down from the cross alive, unlike the two thieves. That is why blood flowed out from his side when it was pierced, while the blood of a dead man is congealed.

This also shows very clearly that all this was a covert design. Pilate was a God-fearing and good-hearted man. He

was afraid to show overt favour to Jesus, as the Jews had threatened to inform Caesar against him. All the same, Pilate was lucky to have beheld Jesus, but Caesar was not so fortunate. Pilate not only saw him but also treated him with favour and did not at all wish that Jesus should die on the cross. It is clear from the Gospels that Pilate sought several times to release him, but the Jews cried out that if he let Jesus go he would be no friend of Caesar....

Among the testimonies which bear out that Jesus^{as} was indeed saved from the cross is the one narrated in Matthew 26:36-46. It relates that, having been informed by revelation of his impending arrest, Jesus^{as} prayed to God all night, crying and prostrating. These prayers, which Jesus^{as} offered in such humility, and for which he was given ample time, could not have gone unaccepted. God never turns down the prayer of a chosen one when he prays in distress. How could Jesus^{as}' prayer have been turned down, which he offered all night in a state of anguish and distress, particularly when he had himself claimed that his Father in heaven listened to his prayers. How could one believe that God heard his prayers, if this prayer, which was offered in such anguish, was not accepted?

The Gospels also show that Jesus^{as} was sure that his prayer had been heard and he had great faith in his prayer. That is why when he was arrested and nailed to the cross, he found things contrary to his expectation and involuntarily cried out: '*Eli, Eli, Lima sabachtani*'—My Lord, My Lord, why has Thou forsaken me? That is, 'I never expected things to come to this pass, and that I would have to die on the cross. I expected You to hear my supplications.'

God Almighty does indeed accept prayers, especially

when the oppressed fall at His threshold with implicit faith in Him. He responds to their cries and helps them in strange ways. To this I myself am a witness. How could it be that the prayer of Jesus offered in such anguish was not heard? Indeed it was heard and God did save him, and for this purpose He caused things to happen on earth, and in heaven. John, or the Prophet Yaḥyā, was granted no time to pray for his time had come, but Jesus was granted a whole night for prayer and he spent it in supplication, standing and prostrating before God. This was so because God had so willed that Jesus should give expression to his distress and pray for deliverance to Him for Whom nothing is impossible. God, in keeping with His eternal practice, heard his prayer. The Jews were false when they taunted him at the time of the crucifixion as to why God had not saved him despite his trust in Him. God frustrated all the designs of the Jews and saved his beloved Messiah from the cross and the attending curse. The Jews indeed failed.

Among the testimonies of the Gospels which have reached us, are the following verses from Matthew:

That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily, I say unto you, all these things shall come upon this generation. (Matthew, 23:35-36)

In these verses, Jesus (peace be on him) clearly says that the chain of the slaying of the Prophets by the Jews had come to an end with the assassination of the Prophet Zechariah, and that thereafter they would not have the power to kill any Prophet. This is a great prophecy and it clearly spells out that Jesus^{as} did not die on the cross. He

was, on the contrary, delivered from the cross and ultimately died a natural death. Had it been that Jesus^{as}, like Zechariah, was also to be killed by the Jews, he would certainly have hinted at it in these verses.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 16-34]

The Jews have always been at a loss to explain how Jesus^{as} died within two or three hours of being nailed to the cross, when even his bones had not yet been broken. This has led some of them to invent another plea that, in fact, they had killed Jesus with the sword. But the history of the Jews does not support this claim.

In order to save Jesus, Divine might and majesty intervened and caused darkness to prevail, which was followed by an earthquake. Pilate's wife's dream, the approach of the night of Sabbath when it was not permissible to leave anyone on the cross, and Pilate's inclination to save Jesus because of the nightmare, all these coincided to save Jesus. Jesus was also made to lose consciousness so that he would appear dead.

The Jews became frightened of Divine chastisement, because of the terrible signs like the darkness and earthquake. They were also afraid lest the bodies should remain on the cross during the night of Sabbath. And when they saw Jesus in a swoon, they thought him dead. It was dark and there was an earthquake and great panic. They were also anxious about their homes and what their children must be going through in the darkness and earthquake. They were also perplexed that if Jesus was a liar and an apostate, which they thought he was, then why had such terrifying and unprecedented signs coincided with the torture to which he was subjected. They were so upset that they were unable to find out for

themselves whether Jesus had really died or what exactly his condition was. All this was part of God's design to save Jesus, and to which this verse refers:

وَلَكِنْ شَيْءَ لَهُمْ¹⁹⁴

This means that the Jews did not kill Jesus, but it was God Who made them believe that they had killed him. It is these circumstances which encourage the righteous to place great trust in God and to believe that He can save His servants as He pleases.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 51-52]

Some people may be troubled by the notion that the Gospels repeatedly mention that Jesus (peace be on him) died on the cross and that after resurrection he ascended to heaven. I have already answered such objections briefly, but I find it appropriate to repeat that Jesus (peace be on him) met his disciples after the crucifixion, journeyed to Galilee, ate bread and broiled meat, showed them his wounds, spent the night with his disciples at Emmaus, escaped secretly from Pilate's territory, and, like Prophets before him, migrated from the country and travelled under the shadow of fear. All these facts indicate that he did not die on the cross, that he retained the functions of his mortal body and underwent no visible change.

The Gospels do not contain any eyewitness account of ascension to heaven. Even if there had been such evidence, it would have lacked credibility, for the evangelists seemed to be in the habit of making mountains out of a molehill. To illustrate, one of them may have said that Jesus was the son of God, whereupon another became anxious to make him God and a third invested him with

¹⁹⁴ Al-Nisā', 4:158 [Publisher]

authority over heaven and earth and a fourth had no hesitation in asserting that there is no God beside him. In short, the tendency to exaggerate carries them too far. A vision in which someone saw that the dead had emerged from their graves and had walked into the town was changed into an actual event that the dead had truly emerged from their graves and had arrived in Jerusalem and met other people. Just imagine how a feather was turned into a crow, and a crow into millions of crows. With such exaggeration, how is it possible to get to the truth?

It is also worth considering that the Gospels, the so-called books of God, contain inflated statements such as that if all the works of Jesus had been committed to writing, there wouldn't be room enough in the whole world to accommodate them. Can such exaggeration be the way of honesty and truth? If the works of Jesus were so unlimited and beyond count, how were they confined within the brief space of three years?...

Then, in the same Gospel of Matthew, we read:

And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away* while we slept. (Matthew, 28:12-13)

Look, just how childish and absurd such statements are. If it means that the Jews wanted to cover up the fact that Jesus had risen from the dead and had bribed the watchmen so that this great miracle should not become known to the people, then why did Jesus, whose primary duty it was to proclaim this miracle among the Jews, keep it a secret and forbid others from disclosing it? And if it is

said that he was afraid of being apprehended, then I would say that when the decree of God had been carried out once and for all and he was resurrected after death and blessed with a glorious body, what fear did he have of the Jews? Surely, they had no power over him as he was now beyond mortal existence. On the one side it is said that he had been blessed with a glorious body upon his resurrection and met the disciples and journeyed to Galilee and then ascended to heaven, while on the other hand, he was afraid of the Jews at every step, and, in spite of his glorious body, fled secretly from the country lest the Jews should recognize him and, to save his life, undertook a 70 *kose* journey to Galilee and more than once told his disciples not to mention this incident to anyone. Are these the ways and signs of a glorious body? Indeed no.

The truth is that his body was neither new nor glorious; it was the same wounded body which had been saved from death; and as he still faced the threat from the Jews, he took all the necessary precautions and left the country. All statements to the contrary are simply absurd.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 46-49]

Ointment of Jesus

I have discovered a piece of highly valuable evidence concerning the escape of Jesus from the cross, whose authenticity cannot be doubted. It is a medical preparation called *Marham-e-ʿĪsā*, or Ointment of Jesus. It is recorded in hundreds of books on medicine. Some of these are written by Christians, some by Magians and Jews, and some by Muslims. Most of them are very old. Research has disclosed that at first this prescription became known to thousands of people by word of mouth

and it was later duly recorded. In the days of Jesus^{as}, shortly after the crucifixion, a pharmacopoeia was compiled in Latin, which contained this prescription and testified that it had been prepared for Jesus^{as}' wounds. This work was later translated into several languages and, in the time of the Abbasid Caliph Māmūn Rashīd, it was also translated into Arabic. Strange are the ways of Divine providence that eminent physicians of all religions, Christians, Jews, Magians and Muslims, have recorded this prescription in their books and have admitted that it was prepared for Jesus (peace be on him) by his disciples. It appears from the study of different pharmacopoeias that this ointment is most useful in injuries sustained by blows or a fall; it immediately stops bleeding as it contains myrrh. It is useful as an antiseptic and is also helpful in cases of the plague and is useful for all kinds of boils, etc. It is not clear whether the prescription was revealed to Jesus^{as} after he suffered injuries on the cross or whether the ointment was prepared under the directions of a physician. Some of its components work like an elixir, particularly myrrh which is mentioned in the Torah.

Anyway, with the use of this ointment, injuries of Jesus^{as} were healed in a matter of days and he recovered enough strength to travel on foot from Jerusalem to Galilee, a distance of seventy *kose*, in three days. It is enough praise for this ointment that it healed the injuries of Jesus who used to heal the others. The number of books of medicine which contain this prescription is more than a thousand....

In short the ointment of Jesus is a grand testimony for seekers after truth. If this testimony were not accepted, all historical evidences in the world would

lose their credibility.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 56-61]

Jesus in Search of the Lost Sheep

It was extremely important for Jesus (peace be on him) to travel to the Punjab and its neighbouring lands in order to discharge his Prophetic functions. This was because ten tribes of Israel, who have been designated in the Bible as 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel', had settled there—a fact which no historian can deny. It was, therefore, necessary for Jesus^{as} to travel to these lands, seek out the lost sheep and convey God's message to them. Unless he did that, the purpose he had been sent for would have remained unfulfilled. His mission was to preach to the lost sheep of Israel, if he had died without seeking them, or, having found them, failing to teach them the way to salvation, he would have been like the man who was appointed by a king to go to a certain tribe in the desert and dig a well to provide them water, but he spent three or four years roaming in other places and returned without doing anything to find the people to whom he had been sent. Could it be said of him that he carried out the command of his master? Certainly not. In fact he cared too much for his own comfort to do anything for the people.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 93-94]

Jesus in Kashmir

One of the verses of the Holy Qur'ān clearly indicates that Jesus and his mother travelled to Kashmir after the incident of crucifixion. It is said

وَأَوْيَيْنَهُمَا إِلَىٰ دُبُورِ قَرَارٍ وَ مَعِينٍ¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁵ Al-Mu'minūn, 23:51 [Publisher]

‘We gave Jesus and his mother shelter at a plateau which was an abode of peace and was provided with springs of clear water.’

In this verse God Almighty has drawn an accurate picture of Kashmir. The expression *Āwa* in Arabic is used for providing shelter against calamity of misfortune; and before the crucifixion Jesus and his mother underwent no period of hardship as would require shelter. It is thus established that it was only after the incident of the crucifixion that God Almighty led Jesus and his mother to this plateau.

[Kashf-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, p.17, footnote]

I am the humble one who has been sent to sow the seed of true purity in the hearts of men, like the holy servant of God in the time of the Roman Empire nearly nineteen hundred years ago, who was sent to preach true salvation to the people of Galilee. Having endured great suffering at the hands of the Jews at the time of Pilate, he had to migrate from Judea, according to the eternal way of God Almighty. He came to India to convey the message of God to the Jews, who after the dispersal of Babylone, had come to these countries. At the age of 120, he departed from this mortal world and returned to his True Beloved, and Kashmir had the great honour of being his burial place. How fortunate are Srinagar, Anmoza and the Moḥalla of Khānyār, unto whose blessed dust that eternal prince and righteous Prophet of God committed his holy body, and enabled many a dweller of Kashmir to partake of true salvation and eternal life. May the glory of God be with him forever, Āmīn.

[Kashf-ul-Ghiṭā', Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 191-192].

The truth is that when Jesus (peace be upon him), after

his deliverance from the hands of the unfortunate Jews, honoured the Punjab with his presence, God Almighty invested him with great honour and prestige in this country and he found himself amongst the ten lost tribes of Israel. It appears that after settling in these countries most of them had become Buddhists and some had taken to a low form of idol worship. With the coming of Jesus, a large majority of them reverted to the straight path. As Jesus had prepared them to accept the Prophet who was to come, the ten tribes, who came to be known as Afghans and Kashmiris, all became Muslims in the end. Thus Jesus was greatly honoured in this land.

Recently a coin has been found in the Punjab on which the name of Jesus (peace be on him) is inscribed in Pali characters. The coin is of the time of Jesus. This confirms that Jesus^{as} was bestowed royal honour in this country. This coin was probably struck in the reign of a monarch who believed in Jesus. Yet another coin has been found which bears the fac-simile of an Israeli male. This is most probably the fac-simile of Jesus. The Holy Qur'ān also contains a verse to the effect that God had blessed Jesus wherever he went.¹⁹⁶ These coins also show that he was greatly blessed and did not die till he was bestowed royal honours.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 53-54]

Jesus (peace be on him) came to the Punjab via Afghanistan with the ultimate intention of going to Kashmir. The fact is that Chitral and a part of the Punjab separate Kashmir from Afghanistan. If we travel from

¹⁹⁶ The reference is to the verse: 'And He has made me blessed wheresoever I may be.'—Maryam, 19:32 [Publisher]

Afghanistan to Kashmir through the Punjab, it is a distance of about 80 *kose*, which is equal to 130 miles, and if we go through Chitral, it is about 100 *kose*. Jesus wisely chose the Afghanistan route so that the lost tribes of Israel known as the Afghans may also benefit from his presence. The eastern boundary of Kashmir touches Tibet. From Kashmir he could easily go there. By travelling through the Punjab, Jesus could easily visit other parts of India before proceeding to Kashmir and Tibet. As some ancient records indicate, it is even probable that Jesus visited Nepal, Benares and other places, and later travelled to Kashmir via Jammu or Rawalpindi. Since he belonged to a cold region, he must have stayed in these parts through the winter and left for Kashmir at the end of March or beginning of April. As Kashmir resembles Shām,¹⁹⁷ he must have settled down there permanently. It is also possible that he may have spent some time in Afghanistan and it is not unlikely that he married there. One of the Afghan tribes is known as ‘Īsā-Khel. It would not be surprising if they are the descendants of Jesus. It is a great pity that the history of the Afghans is very ambiguous and it is very difficult to arrive at anything definitive by studying their tribal chronicles. There is no doubt however that the Afghans too are Israelites like the Kashmiris.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 15, pp. 69-70].

Research has disclosed that after his deliverance from the cross Jesus (peace be on him) travelled to India and Nepal and continued on to Tibet, from where he eventually came to Kashmir, where he stayed for quite some time,

¹⁹⁷ Syria and its neighbouring territory. [Publisher]

and preached to the Children of Israel who had settled in Kashmir after the Babylonian dispersal. He died in Srinagar at the age of 120 years and was buried in the quarter of Khānyār. He came to be known as Prophet Yūz Āsaph, through some confusion of names.

[Rāz-e-Ḥaqīqat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 161, footnote]

The tomb of Jesus^{as} in Kashmir, which is said to be about 1900 years old, constitutes evidence of the highest quality to prove this point. It is probable that there may have been some tombstones with this grave which now lie hidden.

[Rāz-e-Ḥaqīqat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 163, footnote]

Evidence from Buddhist Scriptures

I have discovered various kinds of evidence from Buddhist scriptures, the collective appraisal of which definitely and conclusively establishes that Jesus (peace be on him) travelled to the areas like Punjab and Kashmir. These are as follows....

First, the titles bestowed on the Buddha bear a strong resemblance to the titles given to Jesus, and some events in Buddha's life closely resemble the events in the life of Jesus. Here I mean the Buddhism which prevails in areas around Tibet, like Leh, Lhasa, Gilgit and Hims, which are proved to have been visited by Jesus. As regards titles, Jesus (peace be on him) in his teachings called himself 'the Light', similarly Gautama was called Buddha, which in Sanskrit means 'Light'. Jesus is also called 'Teacher' in the Gospels, similarly the Buddha is called Sāsta, which means 'Teacher'. Jesus is called 'Blessed' in the Gospels, and in the same way one of the names of Buddha is Sagpat, which means 'Blessed'. Jesus is called 'Prince' and so is the Buddha. One of the names of Jesus

in the Gospels connotes that he would fulfil the purpose of his advent, and the Buddha has been called Sadhartah, which means one who fulfils the purpose of his advent. One of the titles of Jesus is the Refuge of the weary, and one of the names of Buddha is Asran Sam, which means the Shelter for the shelterless. Jesus has been called 'King' in the Gospels though what he meant was the kingdom of heaven; likewise the Buddha has also been called 'King'.

The similarity of events in the lives of the Buddha and Jesus appears from the following. It is stated in the Gospels that Jesus (peace be on him) was tempted by the devil, who said to him, 'If you will worship me, you will have all the riches and kingdoms of the world.' The Buddha was tempted in the same way and the devil said to him, 'If you obey me and return home renouncing your ascetic ways, I shall confer the glory of kingdom on you.' Just as Jesus did not obey the devil, neither did the Buddha....

Another resemblance between the Buddha and Jesus is that, according to the Buddhist chronicles, the Buddha fasted for forty days when he was tempted by the devil. Readers of the Gospels know that Jesus also observed a forty-day fast.

Anyone who is acquainted with the teachings of both the Buddha and Jesus will also marvel at the close similarity between the moral teachings of the two....

Just as Jesus sent his disciples to different countries and himself travelled to another country, the same is recorded of the Buddha. It is recorded in *Buddhism* by Sir Monier Williams that the Buddha sent his disciples to different parts of the world to convey his message, and addressed

them as follows: “Go forth and wander everywhere, out of compassion for the world and for the welfare of gods and men. Go forth, one by one, in different directions. Proclaim a life of perfect restraint, chastity and celibacy.” He added: “I will go also to preach this doctrine.” He went to Benares and there he performed many miracles. He delivered a very moving sermon on a hill just as Jesus did on the mount. It is also recorded in the same book that the Buddha often taught in parables and used to discuss spiritual matters in terms of physical phenomena....

The exact adoption by Buddha of this method of preaching through parables, especially those recorded in the Gospels, is indeed most surprising....

Buddhist records also show that Gautama Buddha had prophesied the coming of a second Buddha whom he named Metteyya. This prophecy is contained in *Lagavati Satta*,¹⁹⁸ a Buddhist record to which reference is made on page 142 of Oldenberg’s book. It reads as follows:

He will be the leader of a band of disciples numbering hundreds of thousands, as I am now the leader of bands of disciples, numbering hundreds.

It should be remembered that the Pali name ‘Metteyya’ is the same as ‘Mashiha’ in Hebrew The future Metteyya prophesied by Buddha is none other than the Messiah himself. One strong evidence in support of this is that the Buddha himself prophesied that the faith he had founded would not endure on earth for more than five hundred years, and that at the time of the decline of the

¹⁹⁸ This seems to be a misprint in the original Urdu text. The correct name should be *Cakkavatti Suttanta*. [Publisher]

faith and its teachings, the Metteyya would appear in this country and re-establish these moral teachings in the world. We find that Jesus appeared 500 years after the Buddha and, just as the Buddha had foretold the time for the decline of his faith, Buddhism suffered deterioration and decadence. It was then that Jesus, having escaped from the cross, travelled to these areas where the Buddhists recognized him and treated him with great reverence....

It must be noted that the name Metteyya in Buddhist literature undoubtedly refers to the Messiah. On page 14 of the book *Tibet, Tartary, Mongolia* by H.T. Prinsep, it is written about the Metteyya Buddha, who in reality is the Messiah, that the first Christian missionaries, having heard and seen at first conditions obtaining in Tibet, came to the conclusion that in the ancient books of the Lamas there were to be found traces of the Christian religion. On the same page it is stated that there is no doubt about it that these earlier writers believed that some disciples of Jesus were still alive when the Christian faith reached there. On page 171 it is stated that there is not the slightest doubt that at that time everybody was eagerly waiting for the great Saviour to appear. Tacitus says that the Jews were not the lone holders of this belief, Buddhism too was responsible for laying the foundations of this expectation, inasmuch as it prophesied the coming of Metteyya. The author of the English work has moreover added a note to the effect that the books *Pitakattayan* and *Attha-katha* contain a clear prophecy about the advent of another Buddha who would appear a thousand years after Gautama or Sakhiya Muni. Gautama states that he is the twenty-fifth Buddha and that the Bagwa Metteyya is still to come, that is why after he has gone,

one whose name will be Metteyya and who will be fair-skinned will come....This is why the followers of Buddhism had all along been waiting for the Messiah to appear in their country.

The Buddha, in his prophesy about the future Buddha, called him Bagwa Metteyya. Bagwa in Sanskrit means 'white'. Jesus, being of Syrian origin, was Bagwa—of white of complexion. The people of the land where this prophecy was made, i.e., Magadh, where Raja Griha was located, were dark-skinned and Gautama Buddha himself was dark. Therefore, the Buddha related to his followers two distinct signs of the future Buddha: first that he would be Bagwa—of white complexion, and secondly, he would be Metteyya—a traveller who would arrive from a foreign land....

We can never approve of the method adopted by European scholars who are so eager to prove one way or the other that the teachings of Buddhism had already reached Palestine by the time of the Messiah. It is most unfortunate that while the very name of Jesus is to be found in the ancient books of Buddhism, these researchers adopt the devious course of trying to find traces of Buddhism in Palestine. Why do they not rather try to find the blessed footprints of Jesus^{as} on the mountains of Nepal, Tibet and Kashmir? I know that it was not for the likes of them to uncover by themselves such a great truth which lay hidden behind thousands of veils of darkness. It was for God Himself to do so, for He watched from on high that creature worship was running rampant in the earth and that worship of the cross and the supposed sacrifice of a human being had alienated the hearts of millions from the True God. Then, in His indignation, he sent to the world His servant in the spirit of Jesus of Nazareth in

order to demolish the creed of the cross.

Breaking of the Cross by the Promised Messiah

And he came in accordance with the time honoured Divine promise. Then, at long last, came the time for the breaking of the cross: the time when the error of the creed of the cross was to be exposed with such clarity as the splitting a piece of wood into two. Heaven has thrown open the door to the breaking of the cross, so that whoever seeks the truth may seek and learn.

True, the notion of the bodily ascent of Jesus to heaven was false, yet it had a significance of its own. The truth about the life of Jesus which had become extinct, like a dead body swallowed by the earth, was preserved in heaven like a physical person and it was decreed that it should descend again in the latter days. Thus that Messianic reality has now descended like a physical person and has broken the cross. The evil qualities of falsehood and worship of falsehood, which the Holy Prophet^{sa} has described in the Ḥadīth concerning the cross as swine, have been broken with the breaking of the cross, just as swine is cut by the sword.

This Ḥadīth does not mean that the Promised Messiah would slaughter the disbelievers or would go about breaking crosses. What the breaking of the cross means is that in this age the God of heaven and earth will disclose a hidden reality, whereby the whole structure of the cross will collapse at one stroke. And the slaughter of swine does not mean the slaughter of people or of swine, but it means the swinish habits like lying persistently, which is tantamount to swallowing of filth. Just as a dead pig can not swallow filth, in the same way, a time comes—indeed it has come—when dispositions will be

stopped from swallowing such filth....

Do not think that I have come to wield the sword. No. What I have come to do is to put the swords back into their scabbards. Too long has the world been groping in the dark. Many have conspired against their well-wishers, wounded the hearts of their true friends and hurt their dear ones; but now darkness will be no more. The night is gone and the day has dawned. Blessed is he who does not remain deprived any more.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Meīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 72-88]

Divine Mystery of Jesus' Second Coming

It is one of the Divine mysteries that when the law which is brought by a Prophet or by a Messenger is corrupted after his death, his true teaching and guidance are perverted and absurdities are attributed to him, and all this misguidance is attributed to the Prophet himself, the soul of that Prophet is greatly moved for the removal of all the corruption and calumnies that are attributed to him, and then his soul demands that a substitute of his should appear on earth.

Now listen attentively to this subtle spiritual verity, that the soul of Jesus (peace be upon him) had two occasions to demand a substitute. The first was six hundred years after his death. This was when the Jews insisted more than ever that he was an impostor and a liar and that his birth was illegitimate and that is why he died on the cross. While the Christians on the other hand proclaimed that he was the son of God and even God himself, and that he had laid down his life on the cross for the salvation of mankind. Thus the wretched Jews accosted so insolently the blessed person of Jesus^{as}, and on the

basis of the verse in Deuteronomy¹⁹⁹ which says that he who dies on the rood is accursed, called him accursed, and labelled him a mischief maker, liar and of illegitimate birth. The Christians, on the other hand, raised him to the status of Godhead and uttered the calumny that this was his teaching. It was then that the soul of Jesus was moved and demanded to be exonerated from all these charges and beseeched God for a substitute. Thereupon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was raised, one of the many purposes of whose advent was to clear Jesus of all the false charges made against him and to bear witness on his behalf. This is why Jesus is reported to have said in John chapter 16:

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter (i.e., Muhammad *salallāho alaihi wasallam*)²⁰⁰ will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged....Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth....He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you....

In Luke chapter 14 (he is reported to have said:)

Verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the

¹⁹⁹ Deuteronomy, 21:23 [Publisher]

²⁰⁰ The brackets in these quotations give the author's explanation of the words like 'Comforter' and 'Lord'. [Publisher]

time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord (i.e., in the name of the Messiah—peace be on him.)²⁰¹

In these verses the sentence: ‘I shall send him to you’, clearly indicate that the soul of Jesus will be moved for his advent; and the phrase ‘The Father will send him in my name’, indicates that he who would come would comprehend the whole spirituality of Jesus and, by virtue of one branch of his qualities, would be the Messiah, just as by virtue of another branch he would be Moses^{as}....

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said: ‘I have a strong resemblance to Jesus; my being is joined to his being.’ This Ḥadīth confirms the statement of Jesus that the Prophet whose advent he prophesied would come in his name. So it happened that when our Messiah (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) came, he completed all the incomplete works of Jesus of Nazareth, and bore witness to his truth and cleared him of the calumnies which the Jews and the Christians had heaped upon him, and thus provided comfort for the soul of Jesus. This was the first agitation of the soul of Jesus of Nazareth which achieved its purpose in the advent of our lord and master, our Messiah, the Seal of Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) *All praise belongs to Allah.*

The second time when the soul of Jesus was agitated was when the Christians completely assumed the qualities of Antichrist, and, as predicted, the Antichrist was to lay claim to both Prophethood and Godhood, this is exactly what these people did. They claimed Prophethood by

²⁰¹ The reference seems to be from Luke, 13:35 [Publisher]

interfering with the Divine word and framing regulations and carrying out changes that were the functions of a Prophet. They established what they wished, and invented doctrines and modes of worship and intervened so freely as if they had been commanded to do so by Divine revelation. Such unwarranted interference with Divine scriptures amount to claiming Prophethood.

And they claimed Godhead in the sense that their philosophers and thinkers designed to assume all the functions of Godhead. Their plans testify to their intents. For instance they are planning night and day to bring down the rain on their own, and control births by conveying the male sperm by means of some instrument to the womb of a woman. They believe that Divine decree has no meaning, and assert that it is only the failure of a project by some mistake which is taken to as Divine decree. They think that whatever is attributed to God Almighty is because previously the natural causation of everything had not been discovered and man's extreme frustration was named God or God's decree. According to them, when the system of physical causation is completely understood these 'false' notions would automatically disappear....

Thus in this age the soul of Jesus was agitated a second time and longed for his substitute to appear in the world. When this desire reached its climax, God Almighty raised one who was his spiritual reflection to defeat the Antichrist of this age. That substitute is called the Promised Messiah, inasmuch as the reality of the Messiah is incarnated in him, i.e., the reality of the Messiah was united with him and he appeared in consequence of the demand of the soul of Jesus^{as}. That reality is reflected in him like a reflection in a mirror. As

he has appeared in consequence of the agitation of the soul of Jesus, he has been named after him. The souls of Jesus desired from the All-Powerful God someone in his own image to come down on earth, who should be invested with the reality of the Messiah; this is exactly what happened.

This also explains why the Messiah was chosen for this purpose instead of Moses^{as}, Abraham^{as} or David^{as}. On account of the current troubles, it was only the advent of the Messiah that was called for. It was his people who had been corrupted and among whom the qualities of the Antichrist had spread. Therefore, it was only proper that the soul of Jesus should have been agitated. This is the subtle spiritual comprehension that has been bestowed upon me through a vision. It has also been disclosed to me that, after a time of piety and purity and the supremacy of Divine unity, the world will again return to polytheism and transgression. Some will devour others like insects, ignorance will prevail, Jesus will be worshipped once again, and the error of creature-worship will be widespread. All this mischief will proceed out of Christianity in the last part of these latter days. Then again the soul of Jesus will be greatly troubled and will seek its descent in a majestic form. Then, with the advent of a awe- striking semblance of his, this age will come to an end. That will be the end and the expanse of the world will be rolled up.

This shows that on account of the unworthy behaviour of the followers of Jesus, it had been decreed that the spirituality of Jesus should descend into the world three times.

7

DAJJĀL OR THE ANTICHRIST

The word Dajjāl has two connotations: First, it signifies a group which supports falsehood and works with cunning and deceit. Secondly, it is the name of the Satan who is the father of all falsehood and corruption.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 326]

Dajjāl and Satan

The Dajjāl mentioned in the Aḥādīth is described by the Holy Qur'ān as the Satan, whom it quotes as saying:

قَالَ أَنْظِرْنِي إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ ۚ قَالَ إِنَّكَ مِنَ الْمُنظَرِينَ ۚ²⁰²

‘He (Satan) pleaded in the presence of God to be granted respite until those who are dead of heart are revived. God said: You are given respite till that time.’

Thus the Dajjāl who is mentioned in the Aḥādīth is none other than the Satan who will be slain in the latter days. This is recorded in the book of Daniel as well as in some Aḥādīth. As Christianity is the perfect manifestation of Satan, *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* makes no mention of Dajjāl, but prescribes supplication for refuge against the evil of the Christians. If the Dajjāl had been some other mischief-maker, the Holy Qur'ān would not have enjoined us to seek refuge against the mischief of *Dāllīn* [those who have gone astray] but for security against the Dajjāl.

The verse إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ mentioned above does not mean the

²⁰² Al-A'rāf 7:15-16 [Publisher]

day of resurrection, because Satan will remain alive only so long as men are alive. Satan does not operate on his own, but through his agents, who are the people who defy a human being. Being a group of people, they are called Dajjāl as in Arabic Dajjāl also connotes a group.

If Dajjāl is taken to mean someone other than the misguided preachers of Christianity, this would entail a contradiction, because the very Aḥādīth which indicate that the Dajjāl will prevail over the earth in the latter days, also indicate that in those days the power of the church will overwhelm all religions. This contradiction can only be solved by affirming that the two are one and the same.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 41]

The Word Dajjāl Signifies a Group

Dajjāl is not the name of one man. According to the Arabic lexicon, Dajjāl signifies a group of people who present themselves as trustworthy and pious, but are neither trustworthy nor pious. Rather, everything they say is full of dishonesty and deceit. This characteristic is to be found in the class of Christians known as the clergy. Another group is that of the philosophers and thinkers who are busy trying to assume control of machines, industries and the Divine scheme of things.

They are the Dajjāl because they deceive God's creatures by their actions and tall claims as if they are partners in God's dominion. The clergy are arrogating to themselves the status of Prophethood because they ignore the true heavenly Gospel and spread a perverted and corrupted version as the supposed translation of the Gospel.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 243-244, footnote]

Christian Priests as Dajjāl

Dajjāl in fact is none other than the people known as Christian missionaries and European philosophers. They act like the two jaws of the Promised Dajjāl with which he devours people's faith like a python. First it is the common and ignorant people who get caught in the wiles of the missionaries; and then, those who happen to escape their clutches being disgusted with the disgraceful and false beliefs, are caught in the net of the European philosophers. I see that the common people are more vulnerable to the lies of the clergy, whereas the intellectual ones are more susceptible to the falsehood spread by the philosophers.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 252-253, footnote]

There have been many Dajjāls and there may be more to come. But the greatest Dajjāl, whose deceit is so vile in God's estimation that heaven might well be rent asunder by it, is the group which deifies a mere human being. God Almighty has set forth in the Holy Qur'ān various kinds of deceit practised by the Jews, the Polytheists and others, but does not single out any which might cause heaven to be rent asunder. Therefore, we should not designate any group as the greatest Dajjāl but the one so designated by God in His Holy Word. It would be most unfair and cruel to try to find someone else as the greatest Dajjāl.

On no account can we justify the existence of a greater Dajjāl than the present day Christian clergy. Whereas God has designated them in His Holy Word as the greatest Dajjāl, it would be the height of faithlessness to consider anyone else to be the greatest Dajjāl in contrast to the Word of God. Had there been any possibility at any

other time of the existence of such a Dajjāl, God Almighty, Whose knowledge transcends the past, the present and the future, would have designated him and not these people as the great Dajjāl. The sign of the great Dajjāl, which we can clearly deduce from the Ḥadīth of Bukhārī ²⁰³ يَكْسِرُ الصَّلِيبَ is that the great Dajjāl would defy Jesus and would attribute salvation to the cross.

It is a matter of great delight for the knowledgeable that on this point the definitive verses of the Holy Qur'ān and authentic Aḥādīth are both in agreement. Thus, the truth about this controversial issue has come to the open. The Holy Qur'ān unambiguously designates the Christian clergy as the greatest Dajjāl and terms their lies to be so great as could destroy heaven and earth. And the Ḥadīth also specifies that the true sign of the Promised Messiah would be that he would break the cross and slay the great Dajjāl. Our stupid Maulavīs do not seem to reflect that the main objective of the Promised Messiah is the breaking of the cross and slaying of the great Dajjāl. The Holy Qur'ān has foretold that the great deception and mischief whereby the order of the entire universe might be upset and the world brought to an end is the mischief of the Christian missionaries. From this it clearly follows that there is no greater Dajjāl than the clergy and that he who, having witnessed the revelation of this great mischief, waits for some other, denies the truthfulness of the Holy Qur'ān.

Moreover, as the literal meaning of the word Dajjāl is a group that pollutes the earth with its deceit, and, according to the Aḥādīth, the singular sign of the great Dajjāl

²⁰³ 'He (the Promised Messiah) will break the Cross.' [Publisher]

would be his advocacy of the cross, if someone still fails to consider the Christian clergy as the great Dajjāl, he is indeed spiritually blind.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 46-48]

The Holy Qur'ān then specifies that in the latter days the Christians will dominate the earth, and they shall be the cause of all kinds of mischief running rampant. Waves of calamities will rise on all sides and will race down from every height....They will possess great material strength and dominion, against which all other powers and states will seem powerless. They will also enjoy supremacy in all kinds of knowledge and sciences and establish new and wonderful industries. They will also be dominant in their policies, projects, and good administration, and will show great resolve in their worldly enterprises and will also excel in their endeavour to spread their faith. They will leave behind all other nations in their social, agricultural and commercial policies, as indeed in everything else. This is the meaning of:

مِنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ²⁰⁴

Ḥadab means high ground and *Nasal* means to run ahead and to excel. In other words, they will leave behind every other nation in whatever is great and prestigious. This is the major sign of the people of the latter days who were designated as Gog and Magog and this is also the sign of the mischievous group of Christian clerics who are called the Promised Dajjāl. Since *Ḥadab* means an elevated part of the earth, this indicates that they will achieve all earthly heights but will be deprived of the spiritual

²⁰⁴ 'They shall hasten forth from every height.'—Ṭā Hā, 21:97

heights. This proves that these people are called Gog and Magog in view of their national dominance. Among them are the people who have left no stone unturned in spreading misguidance and consequently came to be known as the Great Dajjāl. And God Almighty has said that at the height of misguidance, the trumpet will be blown and people of all faiths will be assembled at one place.

[Shahādat-ul-Qur’ān, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 6, pp. 361-362]

Dajjāl and the Misguided Maulavīs

Remember, the sum total of the evils which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) prophesied would spread in the latter days, is Dajjāliyyat, of which the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said there are hundreds of branches. Hence, those Maulavīs are also branches of the tree of Dajjāliyyat who blindly follow the beaten path and have abandoned the Holy Qur’ān, so that though they recite it, it doesn’t get past their tongues. Today Dajjāliyyat is spreading its web like a spider. The disbeliever with his disbelief, the hypocrite with hypocrisy, the alcoholic with his drinking, and the Maulavī with his preaching without practice and with his black heart, are all weaving the net of Dajjāliyyat. Nothing can break up this web but the heavenly weapon, and no one can wield this weapon but ‘Īsā who should descend from that very heaven. So ‘Īsā has descended *and the promise of God was bound to be fulfilled*.

[Nishān-e-Āsmānī, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 4, p.369]

The word ‘Messiah’ refers to the truthful one whose *Ma-saḥ* (i.e. touch) as been blessed by God, and whose breath, word and speech have been given the power to give life. This word particularly applies to the Prophet

who does not wage war and reforms mankind through his spiritual power alone. As against this, the word ‘Messiah’ also applies to the Promised Dajjāl whose evil power and influence produce calamities, atheism and faithlessness. Even without employing coercive means to destroy the truth, he can make righteousness and love for God grow cold merely by concentration, speech, writing, association and by the influence of his satanic spirit. On the other hand, misconduct, drunkenness, lying, promiscuity, materialism, fraud, tyranny, oppression, famine and epidemics become the order of the day. These are the meanings which emerge from a collective study of standard Arabic lexicons like *Lisān-ul-‘Arab*; and these are the meanings which God has disclosed to me.

[Ayyām-uṣ-Ṣulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 14, p. 294]

Remember, it is also written about the Messiah—the bearer of spiritual blessings, whose advent in the latter days has been promised to the Muslims—that he would slay the Promised Dajjāl. But it does not mean he will actually kill him with a gun or a sword. What it means is that he will do away with all deceitful innovations in religion.

A study of Aḥādīth reveals that Dajjāl is actually the name of Satan. And the people whom Satan will employ to serve his purpose are also metaphorically called Dajjāl, because they are like his limbs. The following verse of the Holy Qur’ān means that the creation of God is far greater than that of men:

لَخَلْقُ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ خَلْقِ النَّاسِ²⁰⁵

It refers the people concerning whom it is written that

²⁰⁵ Al-Mu’min, 40:58 [Publisher]

they would make great inventions in the latter days and will try to interfere with God's creation. According to the commentators [of the Holy Qur'ān], the people mentioned here are actually the Dajjāl. This indicates that Dajjāl does not mean one single person, or else the expression *Nās* [people] would not have been applied to him. The word undoubtedly refers to a group of people. The group that acts under the command of Satan is called Dajjāl. This is also indicated by the sequence of the Holy Qur'ān which begins with the verse:

²⁰⁶ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ

and concludes with:

²⁰⁷ أَكْذِبْ يَٰ يُّوسُفُ فِي صُورِ النَّاسِ ۝ مِنَ الْجِنَّةِ وَالنَّاسِ ۝

In this verse too the word *Nās* refers to the Dajjāl.... Mentioning these people at the end also indicates that this group of people will be supreme in the latter days, and they will be accompanied by:

²⁰⁸ تَقَاتِلْنَ فِي الْعَقَدِ

i.e., Christian women who will go from house to house seeking to separate wives from their husbands, and to break the bond of marriage.

It should never be forgotten that the last three chapters of the Holy Qur'ān contain a warning about the age of Dajjāl and we have been enjoined to seek refuge with God against the mischief of that time. This is an indication that the mischief of those days will only be dispelled

²⁰⁶ 'All praise belongs to Allah.'—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:2 [Publisher]

²⁰⁷ 'Who whispers into the hearts of men, from among the Jinn and mankind.'—Al-Nās, 114: 6-7 [Publisher]

²⁰⁸ Al-Falaq, 113:5 [Publisher]

through the heavenly light and blessings which the heavenly Messiah will bring with him.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 296-297]

The Meaning of Dajjāl Circuiting the Ka'bah

Our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saw in a vision that the Dajjāl was performing the circuit of the Ka'bah, and was doing it stealthily, like a thief, so that he could destroy the Ka'bah whenever the opportunity offered.... Obviously, no one can say that the Dajjāl would actually become a Muslim and perform the circuit of the Ka'bah. Every intelligent person will interpret this revelation as a vision through which the spiritual condition of the Dajjāl was revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and that this allegory presented itself to him in a vision in which he saw the Dajjāl was circuiting the Ka'bah like an actual person. What it meant was that the Dajjāl would be a bitter enemy of Islām and would hover around the Ka'bah with evil intentions. We know that just as the watchman goes around the houses at night, so does a thief. But while the watchman seeks to protect the houses and to catch the thief, the thief's motive is to steal and plunder. Thus the interpretation of this vision of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is that the Dajjāl will be preoccupied with trying to violate the sanctity of the Ka'bah, while the Promised Messiah, who was also seen performing circuit of the Ka'bah, would be busy protecting the House of Allah and trying to apprehend the Dajjāl.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 274-275]

The fact that both the Promised Messiah and the Dajjāl will perform circuits of the Ka'bah proves that this does

not mean that they will physically perform circuits of the Ka‘bah, for in that case we would have to concede that the Dajjāl will succeed in entering the Ka‘bah or that he will become a Muslim; both of which assertions go against the clear purport of Aḥādīth. This Ḥadīth has to be interpreted, and the interpretation which God has made manifest to me is that, in the latter days, a group of people will emerge who will be called Dajjāl. This group will be a bitter enemy of Islām, and, in order to completely bring down the structure of Islām, it will go circuiting round the Ka‘bah, which is the centre of Islām, like a thief. As against this, the Promised Messiah will also perform the circuit of the centre of Islām, which the Ka‘bah symbolises. The purpose of the Promised Messiah in performing the circuit of the Ka‘bah would be to apprehend the thief named Dajjāl, and to safeguard the centre of Islām from his designs. We know that the thief goes around the houses at night and so does a watchman, but while the purpose of the thief is to rob and plunder a household, the purpose of the watchman is to apprehend the thief and to have him locked behind bars so that people are safeguarded from his mischief.

Thus this Ḥadīth indicates that in the latter days the thief, who is designated Dajjāl, will try his utmost to demolish the structure of Islām, and that the Promised Messiah, out of his devotion to Islām, will raise his supplications to heaven, and that all angels will lend him their support so that he should be victorious in this last final battle. He will neither get tired, nor dejected, nor will he slacken his efforts, but will try his utmost to catch the thief. When his supplications reach their climax, God will see how his heart has melted in his love for Islām. Heaven will do what the earth cannot. And the victory that cannot be

achieved by man will be won at the hands of angels.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 323-324]

If—God forbid—it had truly been written in the Holy Qur'ān that, contrary to the Divine law which binds all of mankind, Jesus was raised bodily to heaven and will survive till the Day of Judgement, the Christians would have been furnished with tremendous means to mislead mankind. **Excellent, therefore, it is that the god of the Christians suffered death. This assault that has been mounted by this humble one, on behalf of God Almighty, in his character as messiah son of Mary, against the people of Dajjāl-like character who were bestowed holy things but mixed them with pollution and who performed that which should have been performed by Dajjāl, is not in any respect less than an assault with a sharp sword.**

It may be asked: Jesus, son of Mary, was to come to vanquish the Dajjāl, and if it is you who have come in the spirit of Jesus, son of Mary, who then is the Dajjāl against you? My answer is that, though I admit the possibility of another Messiah son of Mary coming after me, and he may even be the promised one in the context of some Aḥādīth, and a Dajjāl may also come to mislead the Muslims, yet my belief is that so far there has not been any Dajjāl like the Christian clergy of these days, nor shall there ever be till the Day of Judgement. A Ḥadīth of *Muslim* reads:

و عن عمران بن حصين قال سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه و
سلم يقول ما بين خلق آدم الى قيام الساعة امر اكبر من الدجال

‘Imrān son of Ḥusain reports: I heard the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) say: From the creation of Adam^{as} to the Judgement Day there will be no greater catastrophe than that of the Dajjāl....

Considering the import of this Ḥadīth of *Muslim*, I say that if we were to examine all documentary evidence available to us from the creation of Adam^{as} to this day, and examine the activities of all those who have ever taken upon themselves to do the work of Dajjāl, we shall not find anything matching the Dajjāl-like activity of the Christian clergy of this day. They have in mind an imaginary Messiah who, according to them, is alive and claims to be God. Jesus son of Mary never made any such claim, rather it is these self-appointed advocates of his who claim that he is God. They have had recourse to every kind of distortion and deception in support of their claim, and there is hardly a place, with the exception of Mecca and Medina, where they have not gone in pursuit of their objective. There is no form of deception, conspiracy or design to mislead, which they have not adopted. Is it not true that in pursuit of their Dajjāl-like designs they have encircled the whole world? Wherever they go and establish a mission they turn everything upside down. They are so wealthy that all the treasures of the world seem to lie at their feet. Although the British Government is concerned only with administration and has no concern with religion, the missionaries have a government of their own which possesses unlimited wealth and is spreading its tentacles all over the world. They carry with them all kinds of heaven and hell. One who is inclined to follow them is shown the heaven, and the one who chooses to oppose them is threatened with hell. They are accompanied by mountains of bread wherever they go, and many, who are the slaves of their stomachs, are carried away by the sight of white loaves of bread, and start proclaiming: '*The Messiah is our Lord.*' There is no quality of the Messianic Dajjāl that is not to

be found in them. In a manner, they even revive the dead and kill the living. (Let him who possesses understating understand.) And there is no doubt that these people possess only one eye, which is the left one. If they possessed the right eye as well, they would have feared God Almighty and refrained from deifying Jesus. All previous scriptures mention this Dajjāl, as do the Gospels on the authority of Jesus son of Mary. It was only proper that every Prophet should have warned against this Dajjāl, and each of them has done so, whether expressly or implicitly, directly or indirectly. From the time of Noah down to the time of our lord and master, Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), we find warnings about this Dajjāl, and this is something I can readily prove.

No one can even imagine the extent of the damage that Islām has suffered at their hands and how truth and justice have suffered. Prior to the thirteenth century of the blessed Hijra, there was no trace of such mischief. But around the middle of the thirteenth century this Dajjāl-like group suddenly emerged and started to expand progressively, until at the end of this century, according to Reverend Mr. Baker, half a million people had been converted to Christianity in India alone, and it is estimated that every twelve years one hundred thousands new converts enter the fold of Christianity and start to believe in a humble man as God.

No sensible person can be unaware of the fact that Christian missionaries have brought under their sway a large number of poor and needy Muslims by giving them bread and clothes; those who could not be lured by these means were seduced through women; and those who could not be so trapped were exposed to all kinds of atheistic phi-

losophy which now holds captive hundreds of thousands of young Muslims, who make fun of the Islamic prayer and fasting and consider revelation to be a kind of hallucination. For those who are not able to learn European philosophy, a large stock of fictitious tales was cooked up—too easy a job for the clerics' sleight of hand—which derided Islām in the guise of stories and historical events and was very widely published. In addition, they compiled countless books in refutation of Islām, blaspheming our lord and master the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and widely distributed them free of cost. Most of these have been translated into other languages....

Allah is Great. If our people still do not consider these missionaries to be Dajjāl of the highest order, for whose refutation a Messiah is needed, then the plight of our people is pitiable indeed!

Look, ye heedless ones, just look how hard these people are trying to demolish the edifice of Islām and what large resources they have employed for this purpose. In their endeavours they have exposed their lives to danger, spent their wealth like water, and indeed they have carried their human abilities to the limit. They have adopted shameful means and implemented them to undermine righteousness, and they have laid down mines to destroy the truth and honesty. All the finely fabricated details of falsehood and pretence have been strenuously invented to bring ruin to Islām. If people's minds could not be corrupted by other means, they invented thousands of supposed stories and dialogues to do this. Is there any method of the ruin of truth that they have not invented? Is there any way of misguidance that they have not adopted? Thus it becomes obvious that all these tricks and charms which

the Christians and advocates of Trinity have resorted to, could not proceed from anyone but the great Dajjāl and we have no choice but to identify this group of Christian missionaries with him. When we observe to the past history of the greater part of the world, we gain the impression that, as far as it can be ascertained, there has been no precedent of such successful deception and misguidance as undertaken by these people. And as the Aḥādīth say, the Dajjāl will cause such mischief as would be unmatched since the beginning of the world. It follows, therefore, that these people are the great Dajjāl who was to come from the church, and to counter whose magic a miracle was needed. He who disputes this should produce a matching instance from the Dajjāls of the past.

[*Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, pp. 361-366]



DHULQARNAIN

I will now set out the meanings of the verses in *Sūrah Al-Kahf* which relate the story of Dhulqarnain, and the prophecy they contain about me, of which I have been informed by God Almighty. I do not deny the meaning of these verses which relates to the past, but what has been revealed to me is about the future.

Prophecy about the Promised Messiah in *Sūrah Al-Kahf*

The Holy Qur'ān is not a book of old stories. Every event mentioned in it is a prophecy, and the story of Dhulqarnain contains the prophecy about the time of the Promised Messiah. The Holy Qur'ān says:

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنْ ذِي الْقَرْنَيْنِ قُلْ سَأَتْلُو عَلَيْكُمْ مِنْهُ ذِكْرًا²⁰⁹

‘They enquire from thee about Dhulqarnain. Tell them that for the moment I shall relate to only you a little about him.’ Then it says:

إِنَّا مَكِّنَّا لَهُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبِعْنَاهُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ سَبَبًا²¹⁰

‘We shall establish him on earth, i.e., the Promised Messiah, who will also be known as Dhulqarnain, in such a way that no one will be able to harm him; and We shall provide him with all the means for achieving his purpose and shall make everything easy and plain for him.’

²⁰⁹ Al-Kahf, 18:84 [Publisher]

²¹⁰ Al-Kahf, 18:85 [Publisher]

‘When Dhulqarnain (who is the Promised Messiah), is furnished with all the means, he will follow a certain path, (i.e., he will resolve to reform the people of the West). He will find that the sun of truth and righteousness has set in a muddy pool, near which he will find a people in the darkness. (These are the Christians of the West who will be steeped in darkness; they will have no sun to get light from, nor will they have clean water to drink, i.e., both in practice and doctrine they will be in a terrible state; they will be bereft of spiritual light and spiritual water.) Then We shall say to Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah): It is up to you either to punish them or to treat them with kindness. Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah) will say: We only desire the wrongdoers to be punished. They will be punished in this life (through our supplications), and will suffer severe torment in the hereafter. But he who does not deny the truth and does good deeds will have his reward. He will be required only to do what can be done with facility and ease.’

In short, these verses contain a prophecy that the Promised Messiah will appear at a time when the people of the West will be steeped in darkness. The sun of truth will completely disappear from their eyes and will set in a dirty, stinking pool, (i.e., instead of truth, they will be infested with foul beliefs and deeds). That will be the water they will drink. They will have no light whatsoever and will wallow in darkness. This exactly is the condition of the Christian faith today, as described by the Holy Qur’ān, and the great centre of Christianity is also in the Western countries. Then God Almighty says:

ثُمَّ أَنبَيْتَهُ سَبَبًا ۖ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ مَطْلِعَ الشَّمْسِ وَجَدَهَا تَطْلُعُ عَلَىٰ قَوْمٍ لَّمْ يَجْعَلْ لَهُم مِّن دُونِهَا يَسْتَرًا ۖ كَذٰلِكَ ؕ وَقَدْ أَحَطْنَا

يَمَّا كَذَبُوا خُبْرًا ۝²¹²

That is, ‘Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah who will be equipped with every means) shall follow another path, (i.e., he will observe the state of the people of the East) and will discover a people at the place of the rising of the sun of truth who will be so ignorant that they will have no means of protecting themselves from the glare of the sun (i.e., they will be scorched by the heat generated by their adherence to the letter and their extremism), and they will be unaware of the truth. Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah) will have all the means of true peace and happiness of which We are aware, but the people will not accept them. They will have no shelter against the glare of their extremism—neither houses, nor shady trees nor suitable clothes to protect them from the heat. In this way the rising sun of truth will bring about their ruin.’

This is an instance of people who have the light of the sun of guidance available to them, and who are not like those whose sun has set, but they derive no benefit from the sun of guidance; only their skins are scorched, their complexion is darkened and they lose their eyesight.

This division indicates that the Promised Messiah will encounter three kinds of people in the course of his mission. (1) First, he will encounter a people who have lost the sun of guidance and are wallowing in a muddy and dark pool. (2) His second encounter will be with a people who are sitting in the sun stark naked, i.e., they do not behave with respect, humility, courtesy and goodwill. They are worshippers of the letter, as if they want to fight

²¹² Al-Kahf, 18:90-92 [Publisher]

the sun. Thus they too are deprived of the benefit of the sun, and all they get is their skins burnt. This refers to the Muslims among whom the Promised Messiah appeared, but they denied him and opposed him and did not behave with modesty and fairness, and consequently deprive themselves of good fortune.

Then Allah Almighty further says:

ثُمَّ أَتْبَعَهُ سَبْعًا ۝ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا بَلَغَ بَيْنَ السَّدَّيْنِ وَجَدَ مِنْ دُونِهِمَا قَوْمًا لَا يَسْكَادُونَ
يُفْقَهُونَ قَوْلًا ۝ قَالُوا يَا الْقَزِّينَ إِنَّ يَأْجُوجَ وَمَأْجُوجَ مُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَهَلْ
تَجْعَلُ لَنَا خَرْجًا عَلَىٰ أَنْ تَجْعَلَ بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمْ سَدًّا ۝ قَالَ مَا مَكِّتِي فِيهِ رَبِّي
حَتَّىٰ قَاعِيقُوتِي بِقُوَّةٍ أَجْعَلْ بَيْنَكُمْ وَبَيْنَهُمْ رَدْمًا ۝ أَتُؤْنِسُ رُبُّكَ الرِّيحَ حَتَّىٰ
إِذَا سَاوَىٰ بَيْنَ الضَّدَّتَيْنِ قَالَ انْفُخُوا ۝ حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَعَلَهُ نَارًا ۝ أَتُؤْنِسُ أَمْرُكُمْ
عَلَيْهِمْ قَطْرًا ۝ فَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا أَنْ يَظْهَرُوهُ وَمَا اسْتَطَاعُوا لَهُ نَقْبًا ۝ قَالَ هَذَا
رَحْمَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّي ۝ فَإِذَا جَاءَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي جَعَلَهُ دَكَّاءَ ۝ وَكَانَ وَعْدُ رَبِّي حَقًّا ۝ وَتَرَكْنَا
بَعْضَهُمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ وَنُفِعَ فِي الصُّورِ ۝ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا ۝ وَعَرْضْنَا
جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرْضًا ۝ وَالَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنْ ذِكْرِنَا
وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا ۝ أَفَحَسِبَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَنْ يَتَّخِذُوا عِبَادِي مِنْ
دُونِ أَوْلِيَائِهِ ۝ إِنَّا أَعْتَدْنَا جَهَنَّمَ لِلْكَافِرِينَ نُزُلًا ۝²¹³

Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah) will then follow another course and will find himself at a very critical time, which can be described as between two barriers or mountains. This means that he will find a time when people on either side will be in fear, and the powers of darkness, in collaboration with the powers of state, will present an awe-striking spectacle. Under both these powers he will find a people who will find it difficult to understand him, i.e., they will be the victims of false beliefs on account of which they will find it difficult to

²¹³ Al-Kahf, 18: 93-103 [Publisher]

understand the guidance which he will present to them. But in the end they will understand him. These are the third kind of people who will benefit from the guidance of the Promised Messiah. They will say to him: ‘Dhulqarnain, Gog and Magog have filled the land with disorder. If you so please, let us collect a fund for you so that you may erect a barrier between them and us.’ He will say in reply: ‘The power God has given me is better than your funds, but if you be so inclined, you can help me according to your means so that I may erect a wall between you and your opponents (i.e., he would put forth such conclusive proofs and arguments that their enemies will not be left with any ground for criticism or objection against their religion.) He will say to them: ‘Bring me slabs of iron so that their movement can be stopped, (i.e., hold fast to my teachings and my arguments, be steadfast, and block the enemy’s onslaught like a wall of iron.) Then blow fire into the iron until it appears to be fire itself (i.e., feed the flames of love for God until you yourselves assume the Divine complexion)....

After these verses, God Almighty goes on to say: Then Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah) will say to the people who are afraid of Gog and Magog: ‘Bring me copper so that I may melt it and pour it over the wall. Thereafter, Gog and Magog will not have the power to scale it or to make holes in it.’

Here it should be noted that though iron assumes the qualities of fire when left in it for a long time, it does not melt easily. Copper, on the other hand, melts very quickly; and it is necessary for a seeker to melt in the path of God. This means that the Promised Messiah will need such eager hearts and mild dispositions as would melt under the influence of Divine signs. These signs

have no effect on the hard-hearted. A person can only become immune to Satanic attacks when he becomes steadfast like iron and that iron becomes like fire when touched by the fire of Divine love, and then the melted heart should melt and cover the iron to secure it against disintegration and decay. These are the three conditions which, when combined, form a wall which cannot be scaled or bored through by the spirit of Satan. Then God says that all this will come about by His grace. It is His hands which will accomplish everything and human design will have no part in it. When the Day of Judgement approaches, mischief will reign supreme once again. This is the promise of God.

Time of the Promised Messiah

Then He says that at the time of Dhulqarnain (Promised Messiah) all people will rise up in support of their own religion and will attack each other like the waves of the sea. Then the trumpet will be blown in heaven, i.e., God will raise the Promised Messiah and create a third people for whom He will show great signs until all good people gather under the banner of Islām. They will respond to the call of the Promised Messiah and will run towards him; then there will be only one shepherd and one flock. Those days will be hard and God will reveal His countenance with awe-striking signs. Those who persist in disbelief will experience hell in this very world in the shape of calamities. God says: These are the people whose eyes were veiled against My Words, and their ears heeded not My commandments. Did the disbelievers imagine that they could take humble men to be God and that I should stand dismissed? We shall reveal hell in this very world as entertainment for the disbelievers, i.e., great and terrible signs will appear.

All these signs will testify to the truth of the Promised Messiah. See, how the grace of the Beneficent One has bestowed all these favours on this humble one, who is labelled a disbeliever and Dajjāl by his opponents!

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp 119-126]

One Ḥakīm Mirzā Maḥmūd Īrānī, in his letter dated 2 September 1902, has asked me to explain the meanings of the verse:

وَجَدَهَا تَغْرُبُ فِي عَيْنٍ حَمِئَةٍ²¹⁴

First of all, let it be clear that this verse holds many a hidden meaning which it is not possible to encompass, and under its apparent meanings lie hidden meanings. The meaning which God has disclosed to me is that this verse, taken together with the preceding and following verses, comprises a prophecy about the Promised Messiah and specifies the time of his appearance. The explanation is that the Promised Messiah is also Dhulqarnain, as the Arabic word *qarn* connotes a century and the Qur'ānic verse indicates that the birth and advent of the Promised Messiah will cover two centuries. I have lived in two centuries according to every known calendar, be it Islamic, Christian or Bikramjiti. My birth and advent have not been confined to a single century, and in this sense I am Dhulqarnain. In some Aḥādīth too the Promised Messiah has been called Dhulqarnain in the same sense as I have just mentioned.

The interpretation of the rest of the verse in the context of prophecy is that there are two major peoples who have been given the glad tiding of the Coming of the Promised

²¹⁴ 'He found it setting in a pool of murky water.'—Al-Kahf, 18:87

Messiah, and who are the primary addressees of his mission. In these verses, God Almighty describes metaphorically that the Promised Messiah, who is Dhulqarnain, will encounter two peoples in the course of his journey. He will find a people sitting in the dark by an evil smelling pool of water, which is not fit for drinking, and is so full of stinking mud that it can no longer be described as water. These are the Christians who are in the dark and who, out of their own wrongdoing, have converted the Messianic spring into a pool of stinking mud.

In the course of his second journey, the Promised Messiah, who is Dhulqarnain, came upon a people sitting in the blazing sun without any shelter to protect them. They get no light from the sun, except that their bodies are scorched by its blaze and their skins become dark. These are the Muslims, who, despite being blessed with the sun of Divine Unity, have not derived real benefit from it, but to be scorched by its blaze. In other words, they have lost the true beauty and true moral qualities of faith and have instead partaken of rancour, malice, fiery temper and beastliness.

In this manner, Allah the Almighty has indicated that the Promised Messiah, who is Dhulqarnain, will appear at a time when the Christians will be in darkness, and stinking mud, which is called *Hama'* in Arabic, will be their lot. The Muslims for their share will have only a dry belief in the Unity of God and they will suffer from the sunburns of bigotry and beastliness and no spiritual value shall remain unstained.

Then the Promised Messiah, who is Dhulqarnain, will come across a people who will be suffering at the hands of Gog and Magog. These people will be deeply religious

and pious by nature, and will seek the help of Dhulqarnain (the Promised Messiah) against the aggression of Gog and Magog. And he will erect a bright rampart for them, in other words, he will teach them such strong arguments in support of Islām as will finally repulse the attacks of Gog and Magog. He will wipe their tears, help them in every way and stand by them. These are the people who accept me.

This is a grand prophecy which tells about my advent, my time and my Jamā‘at. Blessed is he who reads these prophecies with care. Such prophecies are typical of the Holy Qur’ān, whereby it tells about someone in the past, but its real purpose is to foretell the future. For instance, *Sūrah Yūsuf*, which on the face of it is only a narrative, contains the hidden prophecy that as Joseph^{as} was initially looked down upon by his brothers but was made their chief in the end, the same would happen with the Quraish. They rejected the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and expelled him from Mecca. But he who was rejected came to be their leader and their chief.

[Lecture Lahore, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 20, pp. 199-200]

9

GOG AND MAGOG

Yājūj [Gog] and *Mājūj* [Magog] are two peoples who have been mentioned in earlier scriptures. The reason why they are so called is that they make extensive use of *Ajīj* [fire], and would reign supreme on earth and dominate every height. At the same time, a great change will be ordained from heaven and will usher in days of peace and amity.

[Lecture Siālkot, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 20, p. 211]

I have also proved that it is essential for the Promised Messiah to appear at the time of Gog and Magog. Since *Ajīj*, from which the words Gog and Magog are derived, means 'fire', God Almighty has disclosed to me that Gog and Magog are a people who are greater experts in the use of fire than any other people. Their very names indicate that their ships, trains and machines will be run by fire. They will fight their battles with fire. They will excel all other people in harnessing fire to their service. This is why they will be called Gog and Magog. These are the people of the West, as they are unique in their expertise in the use of fire. In Jewish scriptures too it was the people of Europe who were described as Gog and Magog. Even the name of Moscow, which is the ancient capital of Russia, is mentioned. Thus it was preordained that the Promised Messiah would appear in the time of Gog and Magog.

[*Ayyām-uṣ-Ṣulḥ*, *Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 14, pp. 424-425]

Religious Disputes at the Time of Gog and Magog

There is yet another prophecy in the Holy Qur'ān, which predicts a spiritual union to follow physical union. It is as follows:

وَتَرْكُنَا بِعَضُدِهِمْ يَوْمَئِذٍ يَمُوجُ فِي بَعْضٍ وَنُفِخَ فِي الصُّورِ فَجَمَعْنَاهُمْ جَمْعًا²¹⁵

This means that in the latter days, which will be the age of Gog and Magog, people will become involved in religious disputes and fights and nations will attack nations just as one wave of a river surges against another, and there will be many other conflicts as well. In this way, great division will spread in the world and great contentions, rancour and hatred will be generated among the peoples. And when these events reach their climax, God will blow His trumpet, that is to say, He will transmit a voice to the world through the Promised Messiah, who is like His trumpet, and upon hearing this voice all good people will come together under the banner of one religion. All dissension will disappear and the people of the world will become one. In another verse, He says:

وَعَرَضْنَا جَهَنَّمَ يَوْمَئِذٍ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَرَضًا²¹⁶

Hell will be presented to those who do not respond to the call of the Promised Messiah on that day. That is to say, God will send down various kinds of calamities which will be a foretaste of hell. Then He says:

الَّذِينَ كَانَتْ أَعْيُنُهُمْ فِي غِطَاءٍ عَنْ ذِكْرِي وَكَانُوا لَا يَسْتَطِيعُونَ سَمْعًا²¹⁷

Meaning that these will be people whose eyes will be veiled against the Call and Message of the Promised

²¹⁵ Al-Kahf, 18:100 [Publisher]

²¹⁶ Al-Kahf, 18:101 [Publisher]

²¹⁷ Al-Kahf, 18:102 [Publisher]

Messiah. They will not be prepared even to listen to him and will be full of aversion for him. This is why the punishment will be sent down. Here the word ‘Trumpet’ refers to the Promised Messiah, inasmuch as the Prophets of God are His trumpets into whose hearts He breathes His voice. This idiom has been employed in earlier scriptures, and Prophets of God have been called His trumpets. Just as the trumpeter blows his tune into the trumpet, so does God breath His Word into the hearts of Prophets. The reference to Gog and Magog also conclusively proves that the trumpet mentioned here is the Promised Messiah, for it is fully established by the authentic Aḥādīth that the Promised Messiah would appear in the age of Gog and Magog.

European Powers are Gog and Magog

On the one hand, it is proved from the Bible that the Christians of Europe are Gog and Magog, and, on the other, the Holy Qur’ān has mentioned specific signs concerning Gog and Magog which can only be applied to European powers, as, for instance, it is written that they will scale every height, i.e., they will overcome all other powers and be supreme in all worldly matters. Similarly, it is also mentioned in the Aḥādīth that no country will be able to stand up to them. Thus it is conclusively established that these powers are Gog and Magog. To deny this is sheer obstinacy and opposition to God’s Word. Who can deny that in accordance with the Word of God Almighty and the explanation of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), these are the people who, in their worldly power, are superior to every other people. They have no equal in the art of war and statecraft. Their inventions and machines have established new patterns, both in war and in worldly comforts and

luxuries. They have brought about an amazing revolution in the culture of mankind and have displayed such mastery in statecraft and in providing equipment for war and peace, as has no parallel since the creation of the world.

Thus, centuries after the prophecy of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), the rise of European powers is the event in accordance with the sign specified in his prophecy. As God has disclosed the meaning of Gog and Magog and events have proven that a certain people fit the signs that have been mentioned, refusal to acknowledge this would be denial of an established verity. No one can stop a person from persisting in his denial, but every just-minded one who is a seeker after truth would, on being informed of all these particulars, testify with full confidence that these people are Gog and Magog.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 83-88]

There would seem to be a contradiction in the Aḥādīth, for on the one hand it is stated that, at the time of the advent of the Promised Messiah, Gog and Magog will have spread all over the world, and, on the other, it is stated that the Christians will prevail in the world; for instance, it is said that the Promised Messiah will break the cross, which means that the Christians will be dominant at that time. Another Ḥadīth also indicates that the Romans, i.e., the Christians, will be in power. At the time of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) the Roman Empire was Christian, as Allah says in the Holy Qur'ān:

عُلبِتِ الرُّومُ ۚ فِي آدْنَى الْأَرْضِ وَهُمْ مِنْ بَعْدِ عَلَيْهِمْ سَيَغْلِبُونَ ۚ²¹⁸

²¹⁸ 'The Romans have been defeated, in the land nearby, and they, after their defeat, will be victorious.'—Al-Rūm, 30:3-4 [Publisher]

Here the word Romans refers to Christians. Some Aḥādīth also indicate that at the time of the appearance of the Promised Messiah, Dajjāl would be supreme all over the world with the exception of Mecca.

Now will any Maulavī Ṣāhib tell us how this contradiction can be reconciled? If Dajjāl prevails over the earth, where will the dominion of the Christians lie, and where will Gog and Magog go, whose world empire is foretold by the Holy Qur'ān? These are the errors from which those who reject me and call me a disbeliever suffer. Events bear out that the characteristics of both Gog and Magog and of the Dajjāl are to be found in the European powers. As described by the Aḥādīth concerning Gog and Magog, no power will be able to withstand them in battle, and the Promised Messiah too will only have recourse to prayer against them. These characteristics are unquestionably found in the European powers. The Holy Qur'ān too confirms this, as it says:

وَهُمْ مِنْ كُلِّ حَدَبٍ يَنْسِلُونَ²¹⁹

About Dajjāl, it is stated in Aḥādīth that he will use deception and create religious mischief and turmoil. According to the Holy Qur'ān, this particular characteristic belongs to the Christian clerics. For instance it says:

يُحَرِّفُونَ الْكَلِمَ عَنْ مَوَاضِعِهِ²²⁰

All this shows that all these three groups are actually one. That is why *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* teaches definitively that we should seek security against the mischief of Chris-

²¹⁹ 'And they shall hasten forth from every height.'—Al-Anbiyā', 21:97 [Publisher]

²²⁰ 'They pervert the words from their proper places.'—Al-Nisā', 4:47 [Publisher]

tians. We have not been taught to pray for security against Dajjāl. **Had there been another Dajjāl, whose mischief was to be greater than that of the Christian clergy, the Word of God would never have ignored the greater mischief and taught us to pray for security against the mischief of the Christians,** nor would we have been warned that the Christian mischief was such that it might rend heaven apart and shatter the mountains into pieces. Instead, we would have been warned that the evil of the Dajjāl is such as might well cause heaven and earth to rent asunder. To ignore a greater mischief and warn against a smaller one would have been totally unreasonable.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp 85-87, footnote]

10

WOMEN

Issues relating to the treatment of women and children have been grossly misunderstood by most people, and they have consequently deviated from the straight path. It is written in the Holy Qur'ān:

عَاشِرُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ²²¹

The current practice, however, is against this injunction.

Extreme Attitudes about Women

In this respect there are two categories of men. There are those who have given women free licence to do whatever they want. Such women pay no heed to religion and conduct themselves in an un-Islamic manner, and there is no one to question them. On the other extreme, there are those who treat women with such severity and harshness that it is hard to distinguish their women from animals. They are treated worse than slaves and beasts. They beat them so mercilessly as if they were lifeless objects. They are treated so cruelly, that it has become a proverb in the Punjab that a woman is like a pair of shoes which may be thrown away and replaced at will. Such attitude is extremely dangerous and contrary to Islām.

Kind Treatment of Women

The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is the perfect example for us in every aspect of life.

²²¹ 'Consort with them in kindness.'—Al-Nisā', 4:20 [Publisher]

Study his life and see how he conducted himself in relation to women. In my esteem, a man who stands up against a woman is a coward and not a man. If you study the life of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) you will find that he was so gracious that, despite his station of dignity, he would stop even for an old woman and would not move on until she permitted him to do so.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 44]

Do not ever consider women to be contemptible and insignificant!! Our perfect guide, the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said:

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ

‘The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.’

How can one claim to be pious when he does not behave well towards his wife.... It is unacceptable to get furious or hit one’s wife on the slightest pretence. There have been instances where an enraged husband hit his wife over some slight matter... and mortally wounded her. This is why God Almighty has said concerning them:

وَعَاشِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ²²²

There is no doubt that admonition is necessary if a woman behaves improperly. A husband ought to impress upon his wife that he will not tolerate anything which is contrary to the faith, and yet he is not a tyrant who will not overlook any mistake on her part.

For a woman, her husband is a manifestation of the Divine. According to a Ḥadīth, had God been pleased to en-

²²² Ibid.

join prostration before anyone but Himself, He would have enjoined upon a woman to prostrate herself before her husband. Hence a man should be both hard and soft suiting the occasion.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 147]

With the exception of indecency, all weaknesses and petulant behaviour peculiar to women should be tolerated. I find it shameful that a man should fight a woman. God has made us men, which is the consummation of His grace upon us, and we should express our gratitude for this great bounty by treating women with kindness and compassion.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 307]

As for me, I once addressed my wife in a loud voice and I felt that my tone was indicative of displeasure though I had uttered no harsh words. Yet thereafter I sought forgiveness from God for a long time and offered supererogatory prayers with great humility and also gave alms because I felt that my harshness towards my wife might have been occasioned by some unconscious weakness in my obedience to God Almighty.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 2]

[Divine revelation to the Promised Messiah^{as}]

‘Such behaviour is not appropriate; ‘Abdul Karīm, the leader of Muslims, should be dissuaded from it.’

[Promised Messiah’s footnote about the above revelation]: ...This revelation contains guidance for the whole Jamā‘at, that they should treat their wives with kindness and courtesy. Your wives are not your slaves. In point of fact, marriage is a covenant between man and woman. Try therefore not to break this covenant. God Almighty

says in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَعَاشِرُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ²²³

‘Lead a life of kindness and equity with your wives.’
And it is mentioned in a Hadīth:

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ

‘The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.’

Therefore, be good to your wives both spiritually and physically. Keep praying for them and avoid divorce. A person who is hasty in divorce is sinful in the eyes of God. Do not hasten to break like a dirty vessel that which God has brought together.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, p. 75]

A Man's Right to Divorce

One of our readers has raised the objection as to why the Holy Qur'ān has left the matter of divorce to the pleasure of the husband. What he seems to be saying is that men and women being equal, it is unfair to leave divorce solely in the hands of the husband. The answer is that men and women are not equal. Universal experience has shown that man is superior to woman in physical and mental powers. There are exceptions, but exceptions don't make the rule. Justice demands that if man and wife want to separate, the right to decide should lie with the husband. But what surprises me is that this objection should have been raised by an Āryā, according to whose beliefs the status of man is far above that of a woman, and even salvation is not possible unless one begets a male issue....Everyone knows that if an Āryā has forty or

²²³ Ibid.

even a hundred daughters he is still anxious to have a son for his salvation, and, according to his faith, a hundred daughters are not equal to one son.... Moreover, *Manū Shāstar* clearly says that if a wife turns against her husband, tries to poison him, or for some other just cause, the husband has the right to divorce her. This is also the practice of all descent Hindus, that they divorce their wives if they find them unchaste and adulterous. Throughout the world, human nature has approved the authority of the husband to divorce the wife for just cause. But, at the same time, the husband is responsible for providing all the needs and amenities for his wife, as Allah Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَعَلَى الْمَوْلُودِ لَهُ رِزْقُهُنَّ وَكِسْوَتُهُنَّ

‘The husband is responsible for providing all the needs of the wife in respect of food and clothing.’

This shows that man is his wife's guardian and benefactor and is responsible for her well-being. For her, he is like a master and provider. Man has been blessed with stronger natural powers than a woman, this is why he has ruled woman ever since the world was created. The naturally superior faculties which have been given to man have not been given to the woman in the same degree. The Holy Qur'ān enjoins that if man has given his wife a mountain of gold as a gesture of his affection and kindness, he is not supposed to take it back in case of divorce. This shows the respect and honour Islām gives to a woman; in fact, men are in certain respects like their servants. They have been commanded in the Holy Qur'ān:

عَاثِرُوهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ

²²⁴ Al-Baqarah, 2:234 [Publisher]

i.e., consort with your wives in such a manner that every reasonable person can see how kind and gentle you are to your wife.

A Woman's Right to Divorce

This is not all. The law of Islām has not left the matter of divorce entirely in the hands of the husband; women too have been given the right to seek divorce through the relevant authorities. Such divorce is designated in Islamic Shairah as *khulā'*. In case a husband ill treats his wife, beats her unreasonably, or is otherwise unacceptable, or is not capable of discharging his obligations towards her, or if he changes his religion, or it becomes difficult for the wife to live with him on account of some incompatibility; in all these situations, she or her guardian ought to report to the judge. If he finds that the complaint is justified, he would decree dissolution of the marriage. The judge is, however, also bound to summon the husband and ask him why the wife should not be allowed to leave him.

Just as Islām does not approve of a woman marrying without the consent of her guardian, i.e., her father, brother, or other near male relative, likewise it does not approve of a woman to separate from her husband on her own. It orders even greater care in case of divorce, and enjoins recourse to the authorities to protect her from any harm she may do to herself on account of her lack of understanding.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 286-289]

²²⁵ Al-Nisā', 4:20 [Publisher]

Propagation of the Human Race through Marriage

Again, the critic alleges that, according to the Qur'ān, women are merely a means of sexual satisfaction and are like fields to be tilled. Just look how far this ill-thinking Hindu has gone in his malicious accusations, and how he fabricates words and ascribes them to the Holy Qur'ān! To such a one we can only say: *The curse of Allah be on the liars*. What the Holy Qur'ān has said is only that:

نَسَاؤُكُمْ حَرْثٌ لَّكُمْ فَأَتُوا حَرْثَكُمْ أَنَّى شِئْتُمْ²²⁶

Your wives are your tilth for the purpose of procreation, so approach your tilth as you may desire, but keep in mind the requirements of tilth, that is, do not have union in any manner that might obstruct the birth of children....

Of course, if the wife is ill, and it is certain that pregnancy would put her life in danger, or if there is some other valid reason, these will count as exceptions. Otherwise, it is strictly forbidden in the Shariah to obstruct the birth of children.

Every sensible person can appreciate that a woman is described as tilth because children are born of her. One of the purposes of matrimony is that righteous servants of God may be born who remember Him. Another Divine purpose is that husband and wife may safeguard themselves against illicit looks and conduct. There is a third purpose, which is that, because of their mutual attachment, they should spare themselves the pangs of loneliness. All these injunctions are present in the Holy Qur'ān, we need not elaborate any further.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 292-293]

²²⁶ Al-Baqarah, 2:224 [Publisher]

Polygamy

Critics often object that polygamy involves intemperance and monogamy is the ideal system. I am surprised at their needless interference in other people's affairs. It is well known that Islām permits a man to marry up to four wives at a time; and this is a permission, not a compulsion. Every man and woman is well aware of this doctrine. Women have the right to lay down the condition that the husband will, in no circumstance whatsoever, marry another woman. If this condition is laid down before marriage, the husband will be guilty of breach of contract if he goes on to marry another. But if a woman does not prescribe any such condition, and is content with the law as it is, an outsider has no right to interfere. In such a case, the proverb seems relevant: 'If the husband and wife are happy, the Qāḍī has nothing to do.'

Every sensible person can understand that God has not made polygamy obligatory, He has only declared it lawful. If a husband desires, for some genuine reason, and under Divine law, to avail this permission, and his wife is not happy about it, she has the options to demand divorce, and be rid of this anxiety. And if the other woman, whom he wishes to marry, is not happy, she too has the easy option to decline the offer of such a suitor. No one is under compulsion. But if both women agree to this second marriage, what right then does an Āryā have to interfere? Does this man propose marriage to the two ladies or to this Āryā critic? If a woman agrees to her husband having a second wife, and the latter too is happy with the arrangement, no one has the right to interfere in the matter. This is a matter of human rights. If anyone chooses to have two wives, he doesn't do God any harm. The only loser is the first or the second wife. If the first

wife feels that her rights as a wife will be placed in jeopardy by the second marriage of her husband, she can seek a way out of the situation by demanding a divorce; and should the husband be unwilling to comply with her demand, she can enforce separation through the court. If the prospective second wife considers the situation to be unacceptable, she is the better judge of her own rights and interests.

It is unwarranted and idle to object that justice is compromised in this situation. God Almighty has directed that a husband who has more than one wife should deal equitably with each of them, otherwise he should confine himself to only one wife.²²⁷

It is mere prejudice and sheer ignorance to suggest that polygamy is resorted to out of a desire for sexual indulgence. I have known people who were inclined towards such indulgence, but were able to save themselves by recourse to blessed system of polygamy—a system which helps such people to lead virtuous and pious lives. Failing this, many who are carried away by the fierce storm of carnal passions, end up at the doors of women of ill fame, and contract venereal and other dangerous diseases. They indulge openly and covertly in such evil practices to which those who are happily married to two or three wives never succumb. Such people restrain themselves for a short while and then yield suddenly to the fierce onslaught of their passions like the bursting of a dam, whereby vast areas are flooded and ruined.

The truth is that actions are judged by their intentions. Those who feel that by taking a second wife they will be

²²⁷ The reference is to Al-Nisā', 4:4 [Publisher]

able to live pious lives, or will be saved from sexual promiscuity, or that they will leave behind righteous offspring, such people should certainly have recourse to this sacred institution. In Divine estimation, fornication and lustful ogling are such great sins as destroy all virtue and lead to physical suffering in this very world. One who chooses to have more than one wife in order to hold himself back from sin, wants to become like angels. I know well that this blind world is a victim of false logic and baseless arrogance. Those who are not constantly engaged in search of virtue, and make no plans for achieving it, and do not even pray for it, are like a boil which shines on the surface but contains only pus. Those who lean towards God, and care the least about the reproaches of the world, seek the way of righteousness as a beggar seeks bread. Those who plunge into the blazing fire of calamities for the sake of God, who are ever anguished, whose souls are melted and whose backs are broken by the effort of achieving great goals in the cause of God, He Himself desires that such people should spend some times of the day and night with their beloved wives and draw comfort for their tired and broken selves, so that they may return to their religious duties with renewed vigour. No one understands these things but those who have the knowledge and experience of this path.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 246-248]

Equal Treatment of Wives

Apart from the degree of love one has for them, a man must treat all his wives equally, for example, in the matter of clothing, food, pocket money and companionship and even in bed. If one were to realize fully all the obligations in this regard, he would prefer to remain celibate rather than to marry. Only a person who spends his life

under the constant admonition of God Almighty can hope to fulfil all these obligations. It is a thousand times better to live a life of hardship than to indulge in such pleasures as are likely to invoke Divine chastisement. We permit polygamy only to save a person from falling into sin, and the Islamic law allows it only as a remedy. If a person finds that he is moved and overwhelmed by thoughts about sex and his glances are persistently laden with sexual desire, he had better have a second wife to save himself from adultery. But he must not usurp the rights of the first wife. The Torah also lays down that in such a case the husband should be all the more solicitous and caring about his first wife with whom he has spent the greater part of his youth and established a deep relationship.

A husband should have such regard and respect for the feelings of his first wife, that if he feels the need of a second wife, but is afraid that it would hurt his first wife and break her heart, in such a case, if he can exercise restraint without falling into sin and without sacrificing his lawful needs, it would be preferable for him to forego the advantages of a second marriage for the sake of comforting his first wife....

I set forth whatever God Almighty has given me to understand in this context. The reason why the Holy Qur'ān permits more than one wife is that you earn the pleasure of God by holding fast to *Taqwā* [righteousness] and by other means such as begetting pious offspring, looking after the near of kin and fulfilling the obligations owed to them. For the achievement of this purpose marriage is permitted with as many as four women at one time, but if you feel that you may not be able to maintain equality between them you should confine yourselves to one wife,

as in such cases marrying more than one would be disobedience and a cause of punishment rather than a source of merit... It is a great sin to hurt somebody's feelings, and female sentiments are very delicate. Just imagine for a moment all the hopes and expectations of the girl when she leaves her parents and is consigned to the care of another man. We can understand their feelings through the Divine injunction:

عَاشِرُهُنَّ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ²²⁸

... The law of God Almighty should not be used contrary to its purpose, nor should it be invoked to serve as a shield for self-indulgence. To do so would be a great sin. God Almighty has repeatedly admonished against yielding to carnal passions. Righteousness alone should be your motive for everything.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 7, pp. 63-65]

Islām and the Rights of Women

No other religion has safeguarded the rights of women as Islām has done. It lays down the injunction so succinctly:

وَلَهُنَّ مِثْلُ الَّذِي عَلَيْهِنَّ²²⁹

‘Just as men have rights upon women, so do women have rights upon men.’

It is said of some people that they treat their wives like shoes and require them to perform the lowliest of services. They abuse them and despise them and enforce the injunction regarding the veil with such harshness, as to virtually bury them alive. The relationship between a husband and wife should be like two true and sincere

²²⁸ ‘Consort with them in kindness.’—Al-Nisā’, 4:20 [Publisher]

²²⁹ Al-Baqarah, 2:229 [Publisher]

friends. After all, it is the wife who is the primary witness of a man's high moral qualities and his relationship with God Almighty. If his relationship with his wife is not good, how can he be at peace with God? The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said:

خَيْرُكُمْ خَيْرُكُمْ لِأَهْلِهِ

‘The best among you is he who is best towards his wife.’

[Malfūzāt, vol. 5, pp. 417-418]

Importance of Inculcating Piety in Ahmadi Women

It is incumbent upon the members of my Jamā‘at that they should inculcate piety in their women in order to ensure their own piety, otherwise they will be guilty of a sin. If a wife is in a position to point out the shortcomings of her husband to his face, how can she have fear of God? If the parents are not righteous, their children would not be pure. Piety of children requires a long line of virtues; without it, the children would be bad. Therefore, the men should repent and should set a good example for the women. A woman keeps a watchful eye on her husband, and a man cannot hide his faults from her. Moreover, women are wise without showing it. Do not ever think that they are fools. In a subtle way, they are influenced by everything you do. If the husband is righteous, she will not only be respectful to him but also to God.... The wives of the Prophets and the righteous were pious, because they were the recipients of their husbands' benign influence. The wives of the wicked and vicious are also like their husbands. How can the wife of a thief ever think of getting up to pray *Tahajjud* in the latter part of the night, when she knows that her husband has gone to steal. This is why it is said:

الرِّجَالُ كَوَامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ²³⁰

Women are influenced by their husbands. To the extent that a husband excels in piety and righteousness, his wife will also partake of it. Similarly, if the husband is wicked, the wife too will share his evil.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 5, pp 217-218]

If you desire to reform your own selves, it is essential that you also seek to reform your women. Women are the root of idol worship, for they are naturally devoted to decoration and ornaments. This is why idolatry started with women. They are also less courageous. Under the slightest stress of hardship, they begin to cringe before their fellow creatures. Hence those who are completely under the influence of their women gradually acquire their characteristics. It is, therefore, necessary to constantly try to reform them. God Almighty says:

الرِّجَالُ كَوَامُونَ عَلَى النِّسَاءِ²³¹

This is why men have been bestowed greater faculties than women. One marvels at the modern man who insists on the equality of the sexes and asserts that men and women have equal rights. Let these people raise armies of women and send them into battle and see the result for themselves. How would a pregnant woman discharge her duties in the battlefield? In short, women have fewer and weaker faculties than men. Men should, therefore, keep them under their care.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 7, pp. 133-34]

²³⁰ ‘Men are guardians over women.’—Al-Nisā’, 4:35 [Publisher]

²³¹ Ibid.

Noble Example of the Wives of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

No one can claim a higher status than that of the wives of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) Yet they performed all domestic chores and swept their chambers. With all that, they were also diligent in worship, so much so that one of them had invented a method to keep her from dozing off during worship. One part of a woman's worship is to discharge her duty to her husband and the other is to offer her gratitude to God.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p. 53]

11

THE VEIL

Today the veil is under attack, but the critics do not know that the Islamic veil does not mean imprisonment; rather it is a barrier which seeks to restrict the free mixing of men and women. The veil will protect them from stumbling.

Wisdom behind the System of Veil

A fair-minded person will appreciate that the free mixing of men and women and their going about together would expose them to the risk of succumbing to the flare of their emotions. It has been observed that some people see no harm in a man and woman being alone together behind closed doors. This is considered civilized behaviour. To avoid such untoward situations from arising, the Law-Giver of Islām has forbidden all such acts as might prove to be a temptation for anyone.

In a situation of this kind where a man and a woman, whom the law does not allow to meet thus, happen to meet privately, Satan becomes the third member of this party. Imagine the harm that is being done in Europe in consequence of such reckless freedom. In certain parts of Europe a life of shameless promiscuity is being led which is the end product of such thinking. If you want to save a trust, you have to stand guard over it. But if you are not watchful, then remember that despite the people being ostensibly nice, the trust will definitely be violated. Islamic teaching in this behalf safeguards social life against unlawful indulgence by keeping men and women

apart. Free mixing leads to the kind of destruction of family life and frequent suicides that have become common in Europe. That some women, who otherwise belong to noble families adopt the ways of prostitutes, is the direct result of the prevailing freedom.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. 5, p. 33]

The Islamic system of the veil does not at all require women to be shut up as in a prison. What the Holy Qur'ān directs is that women should avoid displaying their beauty and should not look at strange men. Those women who have to go out in order to fulfil their responsibilities may do so, but they must guard their glances.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. 1, p. 430]

However much the Āryās may dislike the Muslims and be averse to Islamic teachings, I would earnestly request them not to do away with the veil completely, as the resulting evils will make themselves felt sooner or later. Any intelligent person will appreciate that a large portion of humanity is governed by natural desires and, under the sway of the baser self, pays no heed to Divine chastisement. At the sight of young and beautiful women most men can't help but stare. Women too do not hesitate to stare at strangers. Such unrestricted freedom will result in the kind of situation prevalent in Europe today. When people become truly purified and shed their baser appetites, and get rid of the Satanic spirit and when they have the fear of God in their eyes, and when they become fully conscious of the majesty of God, and they bring about a transformation and adorn the robes of *Taqwā*, only then will they have the right to do what they like; for then they will be like pawns in God's hands and, in a manner of speaking, they will cease to be males, their eyes will

become oblivious to the sight of women and to such evil thoughts. But dear ones, may God direct your hearts, time is not right for this. If you usher in freedom today, you will sow a poisonous seed in your culture. These are difficult times. Even if it was not needed before, the veil is essential now, because this is the last era of mankind, and the earth is full of vice, debauchery and drunkenness. Hearts are filled with atheism and are devoid of respect for Divine commandments. Tongues are so loquacious and lectures are loaded with logic and philosophy, but the hearts are empty of spirituality. At such a time it would be a folly to expose your helpless sheep to the mercy of wolves.

[Lecture Lahore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 173-174]

Many people urge the adoption of permissiveness like that prevalent in Europe, but this would be most unwise. Such unbridled freedom of sexes is the root of all immorality. Look at the moral situation in countries that have adopted this freedom. If freedom of sexes has helped increase their chastity and virtue, we will readily confess that we were mistaken. But it is crystal clear that when men and women are young, and have the licence to mix freely, their relationship will be most dangerous. It is but human to exchange glances and be overwhelmed by lustful desires. As there is intemperance and vice, despite the observance of the veil, it may be imagined what the situation will be like in case of unrestricted freedom. Look at men, how unbridled their behaviour is! They have neither fear of God nor faith in the hereafter. They only worship mundane pleasures. It is necessary therefore, that before granting such freedom as is being advocated, the moral condition of men should be improved and rectified. After men have developed

enough self-temperance to restrain control their passions, you may consider whether the veil is necessary or not. To insist upon unrestricted freedom in the present circumstances would be like putting sheep at the mercy of lions.

What ails our people that they do not reflect upon the consequences of things? Let them at least take counsel with their consciences whether the condition of men is so much improved that women may go about among them unveiled. The Holy Qur'ān, which lays down appropriate directions consistent with the natural desires and weaknesses of men, adopts an excellent position in this regard:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ يَغُضُّوا مِنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ذَلِكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ²³²

‘Tell the believing men to restrain their looks and to guard their private parts. This is the act through which they will attain purification....’

The Islamic injunction that men and women should both restrain themselves in certain ways, aims at safeguarding them against slipping and stumbling; for, in the early stages human beings are inclined towards vice, and, at the slightest provocation, fall upon it as a starving person falls on delicious food. It is every one's duty to safeguard himself.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 7, pp. 134-136]

Remedies for Unchastity

God Almighty has not only set forth excellent teaching for acquiring chastity, but has also furnished man with five remedies to safeguard himself against unchastity. These are to restrain one's eyes from gazing at women

²³² Al-Nūr, 24:31 [Publisher]

who are outside the prohibited degrees; to avoid listening to their voices, to refrain from hearing stories about them, to avoid occasions which might furnish incitement to vice and to control oneself during celibacy through fasting, etc.

We can confidently claim that this excellent teaching with all its devices that is set forth in the Holy Qur'ān is peculiar to Islām. However, one point should be kept in mind: since the natural condition of man, which is the source of his appetites, and from which he cannot depart without a complete change in himself, is such that his passions are bound to be roused when they are confronted with the occasion and opportunity for indulging in such vice, God Almighty has, therefore, not instructed us that we may freely look at women outside the prohibited category, and we may contemplate their beauty and observe all their movements in dance, etc., but that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to the tales of their beauty, but with pure intent. Instead we have been positively prohibited from looking at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, or listening to their musical voices or relating descriptions of their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise. We have been directed to eschew all this as we eschew carrion, lest we stumble due to our unlawful glances.

As God Almighty desires that our eyes and hearts and all our limbs and our susceptibilities should remain pure, He has furnished us with this excellent teaching. There can be no doubt that lack of restraint causes missteps. If we place soft bread before a hungry dog, it will be vain to hope that the dog will pay no attention to it. Thus God Almighty desired that human faculties should not be pro-

vided with any occasion for secret functioning and should not be confronted with anything that might incite dangerous tendencies.

This indeed is the philosophy that underlies the Islamic injunctions regarding the veil, and this is what the Shariah demands. The Book of God does not aim at keeping women in captivity like prisoners. This is the thinking of the ignorant who are not aware of the Islamic ideals. The purpose of these regulations is to restrain men and women from letting their eyes rove freely and from displaying their beauty and charm, for this is to the benefit of both men and women. Remember, in Arabic *Ghaḍḍ-e-Başar* means to restrain oneself from casting even a cursory glance at the wrong place, while at the same time seeing things which are permissible.

It does not behove a pious person, who desires to keep his heart pure, that he should lift his eyes in an unbridled manner like a beast. It is necessary for such a person to cultivate the habit of *Ghaḍḍ-e-Başar* in his social life. This is a blessed habit through which a person's natural impulses are transferred into a high moral condition without adversely affecting his social needs. This is the quality which, in Islām, is called *Iḥṣān* or chastity.

[Islāmī Uṣūl kī Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 343-344]

Extreme Attitudes about the Veil

People have adopted extreme attitudes in respect of the veil. Europe has gone to one extreme in abolishing it altogether and now some naturalists too wish to follow suit, whereas it is patent that this licentiousness has flung open the gates of vice in Europe. On the other hand, some Muslims go to the other extreme and do not let

their women step out of their homes at all, even though it is often necessary for them to travel or to go out on account of some other need. We believe that both these types are in error.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 6, p.322]

12

PROPER UPBRINGING OF CHILDREN

I believe that beating children in a manner that the ill-behaved child-beater pretends to be Allah's partner in guiding and training children is a type of polytheism.

Pray for Children instead of Punishing Them

When a hot-tempered person is provoked and punishes a child, he takes on the role of an enemy in the stress of his anger and imposes punishment far in excess of the wrong which has been done. An individual with self-respect and control over himself, who is also forbearing and dignified, has the right to correct a child to a certain extent as the occasion demands or seek to guide the child. But a wrathful and hot-headed person who is easily provoked is not fit to be a guardian of children. I wish that, instead of punishing children, parents would have recourse to prayer, and should make it a habit to supplicate earnestly for their children; for the supplications of parents on behalf of their children meet with special acceptance.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 4]

True guidance and training belongs to God Almighty. To pursue a matter persistently and to insist upon it unduly and to rebuke children upon every matter indicates that such a person imagines himself to be the source of guidance and believes that he will bring the children to order by pursuing his own method. This kind of attitude savours of a hidden assumption of association with the Divine and should be avoided by the members of our

community. I pray for my children and require them to follow a broad set of rules of behaviour and no more. Beyond this I put my full trust in Allah Almighty in the confidence that the seed of good fortune inherent in each of them will flower at its proper time.

[*Malfūzāt*, vol. 2, p. 5]

REPEATED CHALLENGES

*NO ONE CAN DIE ON EARTH UNTIL HIS DEATH IS
DECREED IN HEAVEN*

I believe with certainty that God Almighty will not let me be vanquished by any opponent, because I am from Him and have come by His command to revive the faith.

My Opponents are Doomed to Fail

God Almighty has singularised me with His lights, which He bestows only on His chosen servants, and which cannot be equalled by others. If you have any doubts, come forth in opposition to me. But you will certainly not be able to do so, because you have tongues but no hearts; you have bodies but no life; your eyes have pupils but no capacity for sight. May God Almighty bestow sight upon you so that you may be able to see.

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, p.14, footnote]

In this age too, God Almighty manifests great signs in support of Islām, and I say this from my own experience. If all nations of the world should unite against me and a test were made to whom God reveals the unseen, whose prayers does He accept, whom does He help and for whom does He manifest great signs, I affirm, in the name of God, that I would emerge supreme. Is there anyone who will step forth against me for such a trial? God has bestowed thousands of signs upon me to let my opponents know that Islām is indeed the true faith. I seek no

honour for myself, but only the honour of that for which I have been sent.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp.181-182]

Divine Support for the Righteous

God Almighty has promised in the Holy Qur'ān four types of heavenly support for perfect believers and those who are perfectly righteous, on the basis of which they can be recognized.

1. A perfect believer is frequently given glad tidings by God Almighty of the acceptance of his supplications relating to him or his friends.
2. A perfect believer is often given advance knowledge, not only of events concerning him and his associates, but also of the decrees of God about to unfold in the world at large, or the changes about to affect some of the well known personalities.
3. Most of the prayers of the perfect believer are accepted. He is often given prior knowledge of their acceptance.
4. The perfect believer is the greatest recipient of the deeper meanings, new points of wisdom, subtleties and singular qualities of the Holy Qur'ān.

In respect of these four qualities, the perfect believer will always surpass others. It is not an unchanging rule that a perfect believer will receive glad tidings from God Almighty continuously and all the times, or that every one of his supplications will be granted, or that he will be warned in advance of all great events, or that knowledge of Qur'ānic insights will be continuously bestowed upon him, but, at a time of comparison with an opponent, all these four signs overwhelmingly favour the believer. It is

possible that a less perfect believer may also, on occasion, be bestowed a small portion of these bounties, but it is the perfect believer alone who is their true heir.

Unless seen in comparison, the perfect station of the believer cannot be clearly understood by every unclean, dull and short-sighted person. Hence, the most clear and easy method for recognizing a perfect believer is by comparison alone. Though all these signs proceed naturally from a perfect believer, yet there are occasional difficulties in the way of their unilateral manifestation. For instance, it often happens that some persons approach a perfect believer and beseech his supplication in respect of matters that have been absolutely decreed against them.... On account of their frustration, they are not able to witness this sign; rather, they increase in their doubts and are not able to appreciate truly the perfect qualities of the true believer.

A perfect believer occupies a high rank and status in the estimation of God Almighty. Many complicated matters are set right for his sake and in consequence of his earnest prayers. Even some matters which have been decreed, and which appear to be absolute, are changed; nevertheless, a truly absolute decree cannot be modified through the supplications of a perfect believer, even if he should be a Prophet or a Messenger. A perfect believer is clearly distinguishable from others in respect of these four signs, though he cannot be permanently and uniformly successful. Therefore, as it is clear that a true and perfect believer is bestowed a proportionately much larger share of glad tidings, acceptance of prayers, disclosure of the unseen and disclosure of Qur'ānic verities, the best way to distinguish between him and others would be to institute a comparison between the claimants on the

basis of these four signs which are the criteria to judge who is perfect and who is not....

Now let the whole world bear witness that purely for the sake of Allah and for the manifestation of truth, I accept this challenge with all my heart and soul. The first among those who should want to take up this challenge is Miān Nadhīr Ḥussain of Delhi. He has taught the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth for more than half a century, but the example of his learning and practice is that, without any enquiry or study, he proclaimed me a disbeliever and thus incited thousands of ill-natured wild people to revile me. He also let loose Batālvi²³³ to spew forth the foam of condemnation from his mouth, and to curse me like a wild beast. And he has arrogated to himself the status of the perfect believer, eminent scholar and leader of the entire Muslim world. First and foremost, he is the one I invite to take up this challenge. He is free to bring with him the Batālvi who now claims to have true dreams. I would also let him, if he so wishes, include 'Abdul Jabbār Ṣāhib, son of a righteous servant of Allah, the late Maulavī 'Abdullāh Ṣāhib, and also Maulavī 'Abd-ur-Raḥmān Ṣāhib of Lakhoke, who made public his revelation about me being eternally misguided, and denounced me as an apostate. He can also bring along Maulavī Muḥammad Bashīr Ṣāhib of Bhopāl who is one of his followers. If Miān Nadhīr Ḥussain should evade my challenge, as he has often done earlier, then let these gentlemen, whose names I have mentioned above, come forth to challenge me. Should they fail to do so, then let Maulavī Rashīd Aḥmad Ṣāhib of Gangohā make a bold move to take up this chal-

²³³ The reference is to Maulavī Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batālā. [Publisher]

lenge, as he is the foremost of the orthodox. Anyone else among the well-known Sufis, Pirzādas or hereditary divines who considers me a disbeliever, an impostor, a liar and a hypocrite, as do these others, may also join him.

If all of them should fail to accept this challenge and try to hide behind false excuses, then let it be known that I have fully discharged my obligation of conveying the message of God Almighty to them. I am the Appointed One. I have been given the tiding of victory and that is why I call these gentlemen to come forth in opposition to me. **Will anyone come forward?...**

These four criteria that I have mentioned are so simple and straightforward that everyone who considers them carefully will acknowledge that there is no clearer and easier spiritual way of deciding the contest between us. I affirm on oath and promise that, if I am defeated in this contest, I shall publicly acknowledge my error, and Miān Nadhīr Ḥussain Ṣāhib or Sheikh Batālvī will have no more need to condemn me as a disbeliever or impostor. In this case, I shall deserve every kind of disgrace and humiliation and I shall acknowledge in an open gathering that God Almighty has not sent me and that all my claims are false. I am, however, certain and clearly perceive that God will not permit such a situation to arise and will never let me perish.

[Āsmānī Faiṣlah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, pp.323-330]

Inviting All to Come and Witness the Signs

There has been a continuous succession of signs with me from the very beginning, and anyone who spends some time in my company, provided he is sincere and steadfast, can see something of them. In future too, God Almighty will not leave this Movement without signs, nor

will He withdraw His support from it. Indeed, according to His holy promises, He will continue to manifest His fresh signs at their appropriate times, until he has clearly established the distinction between truth and falsehood. In a revelation He said to me:

A Warner came to the world but the world accepted him not; God will accept him and will establish his truth with powerful assaults.

I can never believe that these great signs will fail to appear, although their occurrence is not within my power. I assure you that I stand on truth. And, O dear people, be certain that, unless a person has the support of the God of heaven, he cannot have the courage to stand firm against the whole world and claim to do what is beyond his power. Can anyone who stands against the whole world with such strength and hearty steadfastness do so on his own? Certainly not. Such a person has the support of the hidden hand of God, and is under the shelter of the Powerful One Who controls heaven and earth and every body and soul.

Then open your eyes and realize that God, Who honours me with His converse, has granted me this strength and steadfastness. It is under His clear direction that I have ventured forth with great courage and steadfastness against those who claim that they are leaders of the world's religions and enjoy nearness to God, and some of whom claim to be recipients of Divine revelation and have condemned me as a disbeliever who deserves hell. I have come out into the field under Divine direction to challenge them all, so that God Almighty may demonstrate the distinction between the truthful one and the liars, and that His hand may degrade the false to the lowest

degree, and that He may help and support the one who is honoured with His grace and beneficence. Brethren! Please observe that the invitation I have extended to Miān Nadhīr Ḥussain and his colleagues is a method of resolving the difference between him and me. If these clerics believe that I am a disbeliever, dajjāl, impostor, and one stricken by Satan, as they allege, then why would they hesitate in confronting me? Have they not read in the Holy Qur’ān that in a contest Divine help is bestowed on the faithful? Allah the Almighty, says in the Holy Qur’ān:

وَلَا تَيْئِسُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا ۚ وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْلَوْنَ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ²³⁴

‘O believers, do not be weary of the fight, nor have any apprehension. In the end, victory belongs to you, if you truly are believers.’ It further says:

لَنْ يَجْعَلَ اللَّهُ لِلْكَافِرِينَ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِينَ سَبِيلًا²³⁵

That is: ‘God will never grant the disbelievers a way to prevail against the believers.’

[Āsmānī Faiṣlah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 4, pp. 332-334]

The Promised Messiah has been described in Ḥadīth as a *Nabī’ullāh* [Prophet of Allah] which means that he will receive revelation from God Almighty. But here Prophethood does not mean complete and perfect Prophethood, for a seal has been set on such Prophethood forever. The Prophethood I speak of is confined to Muḥaddathiyyat, which obtains light from the Muḥammadī lamp. This is a special bounty which has been bestowed upon this humble one. Although everyone partakes of

²³⁴ Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:140 [Publisher]

²³⁵ Al-Nisā’, 4:142 [Publisher]

true dreams and visions to a certain extent, nevertheless, if my opponents are in doubt, they can test my claim that no other Muslims of this age has been bestowed such plentiful share of true dreams, visions, acceptance of prayers and true revelations that they approximate those of the Prophets, as I have been. This is indeed a great criterion to judge, for there is no method other than heavenly support for testing the truth of a claimant.

For a certainty, God Almighty supports one who comes from Him and guides him in an extraordinary way in the fields of contest. Therefore, I affirm with full confidence and perfect faith that if all the Muslims of the world, be they Punjabis, Indians, Arabs, Turks, Persians, Africans or others, and their clerics, sufis, leaders, and righteous ones, and all their men and women who consider me to be an impostor, should wish to see whether the signs of acceptance by God are found in me or in them, and whether heavenly doors are opened for me or for them, and whether the True Beloved by virtue of His special bounties and the bestowal of His special knowledge and spiritual insights is with me or with them, they would soon discover that the special grace and mercy which descends upon human heart are bestowed on me in much larger measure than on their respective leaders.

This should not be taken for an arrogant boast; it is only a declaration of God's bounty.

وَذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ²³⁶

This is also indicated by the revelations vouchsafed to me:

²³⁶ This is God's grace, which He bestows upon whomsoever He wills. [Publisher]

قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ - الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي
أَذْهَبَ عَنِّي الْحُزْنَ وَآتَنِي مَا لَمْ يُؤْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ²³⁷

“Anyone else in the world²³⁸” refers to the people of this age and of the future.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 478-479]

I say with full confidence that no one can match the blessings that God Almighty has manifested for people in consequence of my resolve, attention and supplications, and soon He will manifest many more signs till my opponents will have to accept my claim. I have often said that I have been bestowed two kinds of blessings: those of Jesus^{as} and those of Muḥammad^{sa}. I know on the basis of knowledge bestowed on me by God Almighty that the degree of acceptance that can be achieved by my supplications on behalf of the problems of the world cannot be achieved by the supplications of others and the religious and Qur'ānic insights, verities, and mysteries which I can set forth at the highest level of composition, cannot be set forth by anyone else.

If the whole world were to combine against me for such a test, I would emerge victorious. If all people were to confront me, I would, by the grace of God Almighty, prevail over them. O Muslims! You have among you commentators of the Holy Qur'ān and Aḥādīth, and those who claim knowledge and understanding of the Holy Qur'ān,

²³⁷ Tell them, I have been commissioned and I am the foremost of those who believe. All praise belongs to Allah Who has removed from me all grief and has bestowed upon me that which has not been bestowed upon anyone else in the world. [Publisher]

²³⁸ The phrase in quotation marks is the last phrase of the revelation in Arabic quoted above. [Publisher]

and boast of their learning and eloquence. There are others who style themselves as mystics of different orders like Chishtī, Qādrī, Naqshbandī, Suharwardī etc. Arise and bring them to confront me! If I am false in my claim that both these kinds of blessing, those of Jesus^{as} and those of Muḥammad^{sa} are combined in me, and I am not the person in whom they were to be combined and who was to be *Dhul-Burūzain* [a manifestation of both] I will be defeated in this contest. Otherwise I shall emerge supreme. By the grace of God, I have been bestowed the capacity to exhibit signs of worldly blessings, like Jesus, and to exhibit Muḥammadī signs in the shape of setting forth verities, insights, subtle points, and mysteries of the Divine Law. And I have been granted extraordinary eloquence to accomplish these matters. I am certain that, by the grace of God, and by virtue of His design, there is no one on earth today who combines both these capacities in him. It has already been foretold that the one in whom these two capacities are combined would appear in the latter days. One half of his person would reflect Messianic glory and the other half would display the glory of Muḥammad^{sa}. **I am that person.** Let him who so desires, look at me, and let him who wishes to test me, do so. Blessed is he who does not hold back, and most unfortunate is he who chooses darkness while there is light.

[Ayyām-uṣ-Ṣulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 406-408]

Appeal to Give up Vilification and Abuse

Purely by way of advice, and for the sake of Allah, I tell the opposing clerics and their soul mates, that abuse and vilification is not the way of decency. If this be your disposition, then so be it. But if you consider me false in my claim, you also have the option to come together in your mosques and pray to God for my ruin, or you can do the

same individually. If I am false in my claim, your prayers are bound to be heard. Indeed, you have been praying against me already. But remember, even if you continue to pray thus until your tongues are bruised, and you go on bewailing in your prostrations until your noses are rubbed out, and your tears wipe out your eyelashes, and the weeping reduces your vision, and your brains are so affected that you begin to suffer from epilepsy or melancholia, still your prayers will not be heard; for I have come from God, and anyone who curses me will himself be afflicted with such a curse, though he may not be aware of it. He who enters into a prayer duel with me and supplicates that the one among us who is false may die in the lifetime of the other, will come to the same end which overtook Ghulām Dastgīr of Qaṣūr....

No one can die on earth unless his death is decreed in heaven. My soul is inspired with the same truth with which the soul of Abraham^{as} was inspired. I have a relationship with God like that of Abraham^{as}. My secret is known to God alone. My opponents ruin themselves in vain. I am not the plant that can be uprooted by their hands. If their predecessors and their successors, and their living and their dead, were all to come together and pray for my ruin, my God would convert their prayers into curses and would fling them back upon them. Do you not see that hundreds of wise people from among you continue to join my Jamā'at? There is uproar in heaven and God's angels are pulling pure hearts in our direction. Can man obstruct this Movement that is proceeding in heaven? Try to obstruct it if you think you have the strength. Use all the cunning and deceit that the opponents of the Prophets employed against them in the past, and leave nothing untried. Use your utmost

strength. Call down ruin till you arrive at the door of death. Then see what harm you can bring upon us. Heavenly signs are descending like rain, but the unfortunate ones continue to raise objections from afar. What remedy can we provide to the hearts which have been sealed. Lord have mercy on this Ummah, Āmīn.

Announced by: Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad

From Qādiān, 29 December, 1900.

[Arbaʿīn No.4, Rūḥānī Khazāʾin, vol. 17, pp. 471-473]

Beseeching Allah for a Heavenly Sign and Decree

O my High, Majestic, Powerful, Holy, Everlasting and Self-Subsisting God, Who always helps His righteous servants, Hallowed be Your name unto eternity. Your mighty works can never be obstructed. Your strong hand always manifests wonders. You did raise me at the beginning of the fourteenth century and commanded me:

Arise, because I have chosen you to satisfy the needs of Islām in this age, and to spread Islamic truths throughout the world, and to revive and strengthen the faith.

And it was You Who said to me:

You are accepted in My estimation and I praise you upon My throne.

You did also say to me:

You are the Promised Messiah whose time shall not be wasted.

And it was You Who addressed me saying:

You are to Me like My Unity and My Uniqueness.

Again You said to me:

I have chosen you to call the people. Tell them: I have

been sent to all of you and I am the foremost of the believers.

And You did say to me:

I have sent you so that I may illuminate Islām in the eyes of all people, so that none of the religions that are current upon the earth should be able to match Islām in blessings, insight, excellence of teachings, support of God and wonderful signs of God.

And it is You Who said to me:

You are honoured in My presence and I have chosen you for Myself.

But O my All-Powerful God! You know that most people have not accepted me. They consider me an impostor and call me disbeliever, liar and dajjāl. They revile me and torment me with their harsh tongues. It has been said of me that I swallow that which is forbidden, devour the substance of other people, break my promises, usurp people's rights, revile them, break my covenants, collect wealth for myself and that I am wicked and bloodthirsty.

All this is said about me by people who call themselves Muslims and consider themselves to be virtuous, wise and pious. They believe that whatever they say about me is true. They have seen hundreds of heavenly signs manifested by You and yet they do not believe. They look upon my followers with contempt. Everyone of them who indulges in vilification imagines that he thereby acquires great spiritual merit. O my Powerful Master and God, do guide me, and manifest some sign whereby Your good natured servants may believe firmly that I am accepted of You, and their faith may be strengthened and they may recognize You and fear You and carry out a holy change in themselves according to the directions of

this servant of Yours. Do make them set a high example of holiness and piety on the earth so that they may draw every seeker after truth to virtue and thus all the peoples of the earth may witness Your power and Your glory and may know that You are with Your servant and Your glory may shine forth in the world. May the light of Your name flash like the lightning, which illumines in one moment the whole expanse between east and west and shines in the north and south. But, My Beloved Master, if You do not approve of my way, then wipe me out from the face of the earth, so that I may not become a cause of innovation and error.

I do not ask for a quick manifestation, lest I be counted among those who try God, but I pray humbly and with all the respect due to Your Providence, that if I have found favour with You, then sometime within three years, a heavenly sign may be manifested in my support and in accordance with my prayer, which should have no connection with human hands and human designs, just as the rising and setting of the sun has no such connection. Lord, it is true that Your signs can also be manifested at human hands, but at this time I desire my truth to be attested by a sign that should be altogether beyond human power, so that no opponent of mine should be able to describe it as a human conspiracy. O my Lord, nothing is impossible for You. You can do all this if You will. You are mine as I am Yours. I supplicate to You earnestly that if it is true that I am from You and it is You Who has sent me, then do manifest in my support some sign that the public can understand and that is beyond human strength and human planning, so that they may know that I am from You.

O My Powerful God, O Mighty One, Master of all

capacities, no hand is equal to Yours, and no jinn or apparition is a partner in Your kingdom. Worldly people have recourse to every form of deceit and devils mislead people with their false suggestions, but no devil has been given the strength to withstand Your signs and Your awe-striking hand, or to manifest such power as is Yours. You are the One beside Whom there is no other God. You are the High, the Great. The light of powerful predictions, which are filled with Divine strength, greatness and terror, does not accompany the inspirations of those who are incited by Satan. It is only through Your strength that all Your Prophets have manifested their miraculous signs challengingly, and have made great prophecies in which their triumph and the helplessness of their opponents was indicated in advance. Your prophecies exhibit the brightness of Your Glory and have the fragrance of Your Godhood, Power, Greatness and Sovereignty. An angel precedes Your Messengers, so that no Satan should stand in their way. I swear by Your Honour and Your Glory that I submit humbly to Your Judgement. If You do not wish to manifest some heavenly sign in my support and in my confirmation within three years, beginning with January, 1900 and ending with December, 1902, and You reject this servant of Yours like those who are wicked, unclean, faithless, liars, dajjāls, betrayers of trusts and disorderly in Your estimation, then I call You to witness that I will no longer consider myself truthful and shall deem myself deserving of all the calumnies and charges and accusations that are levelled against me. See that my soul flies towards You in full trust as a bird flies towards its nest. I request a sign of Your Power, but not for my own sake or for my honour, but so that people may know You

and adopt Your holy ways and should not deprive themselves of guidance by rejecting the one whom You have sent. I bear witness that You have sent me and have manifested great signs in my support.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 507-511]

Persian Poem

O Mighty Lord, Creator of heaven and earth,
O Merciful, Compassionate and Guide;
Who looks into the hearts;
And from Whom nothing is hidden.

If You see that I am wicked and vicious;
If You have determined that I am evil;
Then break this evil one into pieces;
And gladden the hearts of my opponents.
Shower Thy mercy on their hearts;
Grant of Thy grace all their wishes.
Send down a blazing fire on the walls and doors of
my dwelling,
Be my enemy and destroy my work.

But if You do count me as one of Your servants;
And my attention is all concentrated on You;
And if You find my heart full of such love for You,
As is entirely unknown to the world;
Then deal with me by way of love;
And make manifest a little of its mystery.

O You Who comes towards every seeker;
And are aware of the yearning of every heart that is
aflake with Your love,
For the sake of the relationship that I have with
You;

And for the sake of the love that my heart has cultivated for You;
 Come forth Yourself to vindicate me;
 O You Who are my Refuge and my Shelter and my last Resort.

With that fire which You have lit in my heart;
 And with which You have utterly consumed everything beside You;
 Light up my countenance with the same fire;
 And convert my dark night into bright day.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Mahdī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 434]

Evidence in the Form of Divine Blessings

I have set out in these announcements the lights of the power of faith that have been manifested to me in an extraordinary manner in the shape of support from the unseen. They are proofs of the grace and mercy of God Almighty and of nearness to Him and have been bestowed on this humble one by virtue of my strong faith and adherence to the straight path. This spiritual station cannot be claimed by any of my opponents. If anyone contests this statement, let him stand forth and compare the blessings bestowed upon him on account of his following his own religion, with those that have been bestowed on me. But no one has stood up to confront me, nor is it within the power of a frail human being to stand up merely on the basis of his cunning, wicked designs or bigoted obstinacy, against this Movement which God Almighty has established with His own hand.

I affirm truly that if anyone stands up against this Movement to display blessings enjoyed by him, he will be struck down with great humiliation, as this Movement is not of man but is from that Mighty and Powerful Being

Whose hand fashioned the heavens and all heavenly bodies and spread out the earth for its dwellers. It is a pity that our clerics and divines are always ready to sit down with paper, pen and inkpot to condemn me as a disbeliever, but do not reflect for a moment whether falsehood can ever inspire such awe and dread that no one dares step forth in answer to such a challenge. Can a false one possess such courage and steadfastness as has been manifested before the whole world in this instance? Let those who doubt the truth of my statements approach the leaders, preachers and teachers of all opponents of Islām and persuade them ... to stand against me in a contest regarding spiritual matters, and see whether God Almighty supports me or not.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 156-157, footnote]

O Ye who Doubt! Come to the Heavenly Verdict!

O revered ones! O clerics! And O leaders of the people! May God Almighty open your eyes. Do not transgress the limits in your wrath and anger. Study both parts of this book of mine carefully, for therein lies light and guidance. Fear God Almighty and hold back your tongues from denouncing me as a disbeliever. God Almighty knows well that I am a Muslim.

أُمنت بالله وملأكتهم وكتبه ورسله والبعث بعد
الموت. واشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له و
اشهد أن محمدًا عبده ورسوله. فاتقوا الله ولا
تقولوا لست مسلمًا واتقوا الملك الذي إليه ترجعون.²³⁹

²³⁹ I believe in Allah, His angels, His books, His Messengers and Resurrection after death. I bear witness that there is no God except Allah, the One without associate; and I bear witness that Muḥammad

If, even after studying this book, you still continue to harbour doubts, then come and test him who is supported by God. O ye opposing clerics, sufis and religious leaders, who reject me and denounce me as an impostor, I have been assured that if all of you together, or individually, stand against me and wish to compete with me in respect of the heavenly signs that are manifested in support of the friends of the Gracious One, God Almighty will put you to shame and will unmask you, and you will see that He is with me. Is there anyone among you who is prepared to come into the field for such a trial, and to compete with me, after a public announcement, about the close relationship that God has with me? Remember, God helps the righteous. Lay aside your tricks for He is close to me. Will you then fight Him? Can anyone rise in stature merely by jumping arrogantly? Will you rip the truth apart with your sharp tongues? Fear Him Whose wrath is greater than all wraths!

رَأَيْتُمْ مَنْ يَأْتِي رَبَّهُ مُخْرَجًا فَإِنَّ لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ لَا يَمُوتُ فِيهَا وَلَا يَحْيَىٰ²⁴⁰

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, p. 102]

The Holy Qur'ān comprises wisdom and insight and has nothing in it that is vain or useless. It explains clearly that which it states and provides for all needs. It has a sign in every aspect of it. Should anyone question this, we are prepared to establish and manifest its miraculous qualities from all aspects.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 83]

is His servant and Messenger. Fear Allah and say not: You are not a Muslim. Fear the King to Whom you will be brought back. [Publisher]

²⁴⁰ 'Verily, he who comes to his Lord a sinner, for him is hell; he shall neither die therein nor live.'—Ṭā Hā, 20:75, [Publisher]

Let a select group of the learned religious scholars of Nadwah come to Qādiān and demand proofs of miracles and definitive arguments based on the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth which support my claim. Then, if I fail to furnish full proof according to the practice of the Prophets (peace be upon them), I will allow all my books to be burnt. Only a godly one would go to such lengths. Why would the Nadwah take so much trouble? They care the least about the hereafter, so why should they fear God? Yet each of the clerics of Nadwah should remember that he will not remain in this world forever. Death is beckoning. God observes from heaven that the sport and play with which they occupy themselves, and which they call religion, has nothing to do with faith. They are content with the shell and are unaware of the kernel. This is not the service of Islām but is its enmity. Alas! If they had been blessed with eyesight they would have realized that the world has been guilty of a grave sin in rejecting God's Messiah; but this realization would only come after death.

[*Tuḥfat-un-Nadwah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 19, p. 101]

The nature of converse with the Divine is that God Almighty bestows the honour of such a dialogue upon one who is wholly devoted to the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) as He granted to earlier Prophets. In this dialogue, the *Kalīmullāh* [the servant who is blessed with converse with God] talks to Him like one man to another. He puts a question to God, Who responds to him; even though such question and answer may extend to fifty or more exchanges. Through such dialogue, God Almighty bestows three types of bounties upon His perfect servant:

1. Most of his supplications are granted and he is

foretold about their acceptance.

2. God Almighty discloses many matters of the unseen to him.
3. The philosophy of many teachings of the Holy Qur'ān is revealed to him through revelation.

Whoever rejects me and claims that he himself is blessed with Divine converse, I call upon him in the name of God to compete with me in respect of all these three criteria. Both of us should write an exegesis on any seven verses of the Holy Qur'ān to be agreed upon. My opponent should write on the basis of revelation vouchsafed to him and I shall write on the basis of mine. Each of us should set forth, in advance, some revelations received by him intimating acceptance of prayers and relating to matters beyond human capacity. He should also disclose in advance some hidden matter relating to the future and so should I. Both our statements should be published through posters. Thus truth and falsehood of each party will become evident.

But remember, my opponents will never be able to do this. The hearts of liars have been cursed by God. He will neither disclose to them the light of the Holy Qur'ān, nor accept their supplications, nor inform them of such acceptance in advance, nor will He disclose anything of the unseen to them:

لَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ²⁴¹

Now that I have made this announcement, anyone who neither stands forth against me in the manner set out, nor

²⁴¹ 'He reveals not His secrets to anyone, except to him who He chooses, namely a messenger of His.'—Al-Jinn, 72:27-28 [Publisher]

restrains himself from denouncing me as an impostor, will be under the curse of God, the angels and all the righteous ones. *And the only duty of a Messenger is to convey the message.*

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, p.303, footnote]

An Invitation to Pīr Mehr 'Alī Shāh of Golrah

The readers of this announcement will be aware that, having observed the persistent condemnation and vilification of opposing clerics and custodians of shrines, and having noted their demand for a sign, I had made an announcement that was addressed especially to Pīr Mehr 'Alī Shāh Ṣāḥib. The sum and substance of that announcement was that there have so far been many discussions on religious issues from which the opposing Maulavīs have derived no benefit, but as they continue to ask for heavenly signs, it is possible that they might derive some benefit from them. It was published because Pīr Mehr 'Alī Shāh Ṣāḥib, who claims excellence of sainthood, as well as a high intellectual calibre and, on account of his confidence in his learning, has recently renewed his condemnation of me as a disbeliever, and has published a book in order to provoke the common people against me.... And since God Almighty has honoured me with the revelation:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ

'The Almighty Allah has taught thee the Holy Qur'ān'; I had, therefore, suggested that it would be enough of a sign for testing my truth or falsehood if Pīr Mehr 'Alī Shāh Ṣāḥib and I both were to write a commentary in clear and eloquent Arabic on some Chapters of the Holy Qur'ān. If he is judged better than me, I shall have no hesitation in acknowledging his superiority. With this in

view, my announcement was made entirely in good faith ... but he has completely evaded my challenge....

Today, God Almighty has put a plan in my mind which I set forth to conclusively resolve this matter, and I believe that it will fully expose Pīr Mehr ‘Alī Shāh Ṣāhib, for the whole world is not blind; there are some who are fair and just. The plan is that today I give the following answer to the constant barrage of announcements, which are being published in favour of Pīr Mehr ‘Alī Shāh Ṣāhib. If Pīr Mehr ‘Alī Shāh Ṣāhib is truly exceptional in his knowledge of the Qur’ān and Arabic literature, and is well versed in the arts of persuasion and eloquence, I believe he must still be in possession of those qualities since it is not long since he moved to Lahore. I propose here and now to establish the truth by writing a commentary on *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* and setting down the verities and truths of this chapter of the Holy Qur’ān. As for Ḥaḍrat Pīr Ṣāhib, he should also base his evidence regarding the Promised Messiah and the bloodthirsty Maḥdī on *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah*. He is at liberty to deduce his conclusive arguments and crucial verities from *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah*, written in eloquent and brilliant Arabic. The two books should be printed and published within seventy days beginning from the fifteenth of December, 1900. This will allow knowledgeable people to compare and decide for themselves. If three scholars, who possess literary qualities and are proficient in Arabic and have no connection with either of us, state on oath that Pīr Ṣāhib’s book is superior to mine, both in composition and in setting forth the verities of the Holy Qur’ān, I shall immediately pay five hundred rupees to Pīr Ṣāhib.... He will be at liberty to seek help in this enterprise from Maulavī Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batāla, Maulavī ‘Abdul Jabbār of Ghaznī and

Muḥammad Ḥassan of Bhīn. He is even free to employ three or four Arab scholars who possess literary qualifications for this purpose. These commentaries should not be less than four *juz*²⁴² each.... If any of us fails to publish such a commentary within the appointed term—between 15 December 1900 and 25 February 1901—he will be considered false in his claim, and no further proof of his falsehood will be necessary. *Peace be upon those who follow the guidance.*

Announced by: Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad

From Qādiān, 15 December, 1900.

[Arbaʿīn No. 4, Rūḥānī Khazāʾin, vol. 17, pp. 479-484]

Knowledge of Arabic and the Holy Qurʾān as Signs of Divine Support

I once received the revelation:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ - يَا أَحْمَدُ فَاحْضَبِ الرَّحْمَةَ عَلَى شَفَتَيْكَ

‘The Gracious One has taught thee the Qurʾān. O Aḥmad, grace flows from thy lips.’

From this revelation I understood that God had, as a miraculous sign, bestowed two types of bounties on me with reference to the Holy Qurʾān and its language.

(1) One is that I have been instructed, in an extraordinary manner, in the high insights of the Holy Qurʾān, in respect of which no one can compete with me. (2) Secondly, I have been bestowed such proficiency in the language of the Holy Qurʾān, namely Arabic, that all the opposing divines combined will not be able to compete

²⁴² One *Juz* comprises 16 pages. [Fīrozul-Lughāt, Published by Feroz Sons, Lahore, p. 458]

with me, and they will see that the sweetness, eloquence and mastery of Arabic that characterises my composition cannot be equalled by them, their friends, their teachers or their revered ones. After receiving this revelation, I wrote a commentary on some Sūrah's and passages of the Holy Qur'ān and compiled several books in fluent Arabic, and invited my opponents to compete with me and offered them large sums of money as award in case of their success. The leaders among them, like Miān Nadhīr Ḥussain of Delhi and Abū Sa'īd Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batāla, who is the editor of *Ishā'at-us-Sunnah*, were repeatedly invited that if they claimed to possess some knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān or had any proficiency in Arabic or if they considered me false in respect of my claim of being the Promised Messiah, they should put forth matching instances of the verities and insights which I have presented fluently in these books claiming that they are beyond human capacity and constitute the signs of God Almighty. But they failed altogether to take up my challenge. Neither of them set forth a matching instance of the verities and insights which I had described in my commentaries on some of the passages and verses of the Holy Qur'ān, nor was any of them able to compose even two lines in Arabic like the books that I had published in eloquent Arabic. Anyone who has read my books *Nūr-ul-Haq*, *Karāmāt-uş-Şādiqīn*, *Sirr-ul-Khilāfah*, *Itmām-ul-Hujjah*, etc, and the Arabic portions of *Anjām-i-Ātham* and *Najm-ul-Hudā*, will have clearly recognized their high literary standard, both in prose and poetry; and will also have observed how forcefully I have challenged all opposing divines that if they laid claim to some knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān and have any degree of proficiency in Arabic, they should produce a match of

these books; otherwise, they should acknowledge that this enterprise of mine has been undertaken under Divine direction and should confess that these books of mine are a sign of my truth. Alas, they neither abandoned their opposition nor were able to match my books. In any case, the message of God Almighty was conveyed fully to them and they were proven guilty of having disobeyed a commissioned one of God.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 230-231]

To disabuse the minds of the common people that Miān Muḥammad Ḥussain Batālavī, or other like-minded opposing clerics who share his views and mistakenly believe him to possess a high degree of proficiency in Arabic and in the verities of the Word of God, it has been considered proper to publish this monograph in a final effort to expose the myth of Baṭālvi and the divines associated with him, concerning their knowledge of Arabic and their comprehension of Divine verities. This booklet comprises four Arabic odes and a commentary on *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah*. Though these odes have been completed within one week, in a few hours in fact, but for the sake of carrying the matter to the final conclusion, I hereby solemnly promise that if within one month of the publication of this booklet, they publish their matching booklet exhibiting the same high degree of literary merit and comprising the same number of Arabic verses that are comprised in my booklet, along with a commentary of the *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* matching mine in every respect, **I shall pay them one thousand rupees as reward....**

I further promise that, upon publication of the booklet, if their odes and their commentary are found free from grammatical or idiomatic errors and are acknowledged to be superior to my odes and commentary, and, what is

more, if they are able to point out any mistakes in my compositions, I shall pay them five rupees for every such mistake. Remember, it is easy to criticize, even an ignorant person can do this much; but it is difficult to establish high merit. In respect of the commentary, it should be remembered that a commentary written by merely copying other commentaries will not be acceptable. It must comprise new verities and insights, provided they are not opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and to whatever the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) has said.

[*Karāmāt-uṣ-Ṣādiqīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 7, pp. 47-49]

Some opponents of Islām put forward the objection that, although it seems reasonable that the Word of God should be matchless, yet how can the matchlessness of any book be established by plain reasoning. They demand that if the Holy Qur'ān is matchless, this quality should be established by some convincing arguments, inasmuch as its high literary excellence can be appreciated only by one whose mother tongue is Arabic, and it does not constitute a proof of matchlessness for others, nor can others benefit from it. The answer is that this objection is raised only by people who have never sincerely tried to ascertain the matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān from someone possessing knowledge of it. Instead, they avoid the light of the Holy Qur'ān, lest they should be affected by it. The matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān is so patent and obvious in the estimation of seekers after truth, that it spreads its rays in all directions, like the sun, in the comprehension of which one need encounter no doubt or difficulty. If there is no intervening darkness of bigotry and hostility, that perfect light can be appreciated with even a little attention. It is true that some aspects of

the matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān are such as to require some knowledge of Arabic for their comprehension, but it is a mistake resulting from ignorance to imagine that the entire range of the miraculousness of the Qur'ān depends upon the knowledge of Arabic, and that all Qur'ānic wonders and all the great qualities of this discriminating Book can be appreciated only by the Arabs, and that non-Arabs are barred from them. This is utterly wrong. It is clear to every knowledgeable person, that most of the aspects of the matchlessness of the Holy Qur'ān are so simple and easy to understand that no knowledge of Arabic is needed. They are so manifest and clear that minimal intelligence, which should be characteristic of every human being, suffices for their understanding. For instance, one aspect of its matchlessness is that, despite its brevity, to the extent that if it is written out by an average pen it can be comprised within a few pages, it comprehends all religious verities which lay scattered in diverse books and in the scriptures of previous Prophets. Furthermore, it also possesses the distinction that whatever verities a person might discover by diligence, effort and search in religious fields through the exercise of his intelligence and perception, or whatever new verities and insights or proofs and arguments he might set forth by the exercise of his reason, or should offer the subtlest verity which the ancient philosophers may have discovered through great labour for a comparison, or should wish to discover from the Holy Qur'ān the remedy for the inner disorders and the spiritual maladies from which most people suffer, he can test the Qur'ān in whichever aspect and by whatever method he might desire, and he will find that, in setting forth its truth and wisdom, the Holy Qur'ān encompasses everything like a circle and no

religious verity is left out by it. Indeed the Holy Qur'ān improves and corrects the statements of philosophers that were defective due to their limited knowledge or defective reasoning. Besides, the Holy Qur'ān sets out accurately and correctly truths that no philosopher or thinker has set out, and to which no intellect has gained access. It sets out in full all the fine points relating to knowledge of the Divine which were scattered in hundreds of collections and comprised of many lengthy volumes, but were still imperfect and incomplete. It leaves no room for any wise person in future to set forth a new point. Despite all this, the whole script of the Holy Qur'ān does not exceed 80 pages of normal handwriting. This is an aspect of matchlessness that a person of average intellect cannot doubt.

Every reasonable person can appreciate that it is not within the power of man or any other creature to set out all religious truth, all insights relating to the subject of divinity, all arguments and proofs in support of true principles resulting from intellectual exercises of all thinkers, ancient and modern, with such completeness in a book of moderate size from which no verity has been left out.

For every person, literate or illiterate, there is a clear and straight way for testing this aspect of the Holy Qur'ān. If anyone should be in doubt about the Holy Qur'ān comprising all Divine verities, we are prepared to undertake that a seeker after truth, after making a written promise that if he is satisfied he would accept Islām, should set forth a certain number of religious verities out of a Hebrew, Greek, Latin, English, Sanskrit or any other book, or should set forth some subtle points relating to any subjects of divinity out of his own intellect. If he does so, we shall produce for him the same out of the Holy Qur'ān.

The truth is that if any cleric of this country should wish to compete with me in respect of Qur'ānic insights, and I should write a commentary on a chapter of the Holy Qur'ān and he should write a commentary on the same chapter, he would certainly be humbled and would not be able to stand against me. That is why, despite my insistence, the Maulavīs do not respond to my challenges. This is a great sign, but only for those who possess faith and a sense of justice.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 292-293]

I desire to demolish the Arabs' claim to literary excellence and eloquence. Let these journalists, who call themselves masters of the language having written a few lines, come forth, if they dare, to challenge this sign. Their pens will be broken. If they have any power or proficiency, they can take up this challenge individually or collectively. They will then realize the truth, and the lie which the ignorant are wont to repeat, that I get my books written by Arabs on payment of thousands of rupees, will also be exposed. Then it will also become clear as to who is the Arab that can write a book of such high literary standard and full of such verities and insights. The books that these claimants of proficiency in literary qualities write are like a pile of hard and soft, white and black pieces of stones. While my books, which contain analysis of Qur'ānic verities and insights, are sweet and delicious. That which is composed with the support of the Holy Spirit and the words that are inspired by it, possess a unique sweetness, splendour and power which others cannot master. This will be a great sign indeed!

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 375]

Though I have so far published nearly seventeen match-

less books in Arabic, against which my opponents have not published even one during the past ten years, it occurred to me today that as those books not only possess high literary merit but also comprise many Qur'ānic truths and insights, it is possible that my opponents might make the excuse that they are not conversant with truths and insights, and that if it had been an Arabic poem of high merit like the average type of odes, they would certainly have produced its match. It also occurred to me that if Maulavī Thanā'ullāh Ṣāhib were invited to compose a book matching my book *I'jāz-ul-Masīh*, he would be sure to demand proof that the book had been written within seventy days. If he were to claim that I had taken two years in writing this book and that he too should be allowed two years for writing a comparable book, it would be difficult to convince him that I had written my book within seventy days. I, therefore, thought it proper to supplicate to God Almighty that He should enable me to compose, with the help of the Holy Spirit, an ode describing the debates that took place at Mud, so that no one should find it difficult to determine the period during which the ode was composed. My supplication was accepted and I completed the compilation of the ode within five days. If I had not been otherwise engaged, the ode could have been composed in one day, and if no delay had been encountered it could have been published on 9th November, 1902.

This is a great sign, to which Maulavī Thanā'ullāh Ṣāhib is himself a witness, as the ode itself shows that it was written after the debate to which he was a party. The debate took place on 29th and 30th October 1902, and I started writing the ode on 8th November upon the return of our friends. It was completed on 12th November along

with this Urdu writing. As I am certain that this ode is a great sign of Divine support, so that God may put my opponents to shame and silence them, therefore I present this sign to Maulavī Thanā'ullāh Ṣāhib and his helpers with an offer of a reward of ten thousand rupees. If, within five days, they compose a matching ode together with an Urdu writing of the length of this writing, which is also a sign, I shall immediately pay them ten thousand rupees. In addition, I can allow them one week for printing and two days for its transmission through the mail. Thus if fourteen days after receiving my ode and its accompanying Urdu portion, they publish the same number of verses possessing the same high literary merit, I shall pay them ten thousand rupees as reward. They will be free to seek the help of Maulavī Muḥammad Ḥussain Ṣāhib or any other gentleman.

Another reason why they should make this effort is that in one of my announcements I have predicted that by the end of December 1902, an extraordinary sign would be manifested in my support. Though such a sign has already been manifested in other forms, if Maulavī Thanā'ullāh and other clerics whom I have addressed, fail to respond to this challenge, this will also be a sign in fulfilment of my prediction. So it is incumbent upon them, if they consider my claim to be the result of my own design, that they should accept my challenge and frustrate this sign. I affirm on oath that if, individually or collectively, they publish within the time prescribed an ode in Arabic supplemented by an Urdu writing corresponding to the ode and the Urdu writing that I have composed, and mail them to me within twelve days, I shall not only pay them ten thousand rupees as an award, but their success will prove my falsehood, and Maulavī

Thanā'ullāh Ṣāḥib and his friends will no longer have to invent lies against me, and they will achieve an easy victory. Failing this, they will no longer have any justification for calling me false or denying my signs.

I call heaven and earth to witness that I place my reliance from today onwards on this sign. If my claim is true, and God Almighty knows that it is true, it will not be possible for Maulavī Thanā'ullāh, or any other Maulavī associated with him, to compose an ode and an Urdu writing like mine within five days, as God Almighty will break their pens and will make their minds dull. Maulavī Thanā'ullāh cannot claim that I composed this ode in advance, since it is about the debate which was held at Mud. If I had composed it in advance, then they must acknowledge that I possess knowledge of the unseen, which would still constitute a sign. So they have no way of escape now. Today the revelation has been fulfilled in which God said:

The affairs decreed by the All-Powerful God have been manifested;

Those who issued declarations of kufr have been apprehended.

[I'jāz-e-Aḥmadī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 145-148]

Is it not a Divine sign that the one concerning whom it was said that he was an ignoramus and did not know a single rule of grammar, calls upon all the Maulavīs who denounce him as a disbeliever to compete with him in writing a commentary for which he would award them a thousand rupees, and to write a book matching his book *Nūr-ul-Ḥaqq* for which he is prepared to deposit five thousand rupees in advance to be awarded to them; and not one of them has the courage to come forward and accept his challenge....

I have called them repeatedly and most emphatically to come forward but they have paid no attention to my invitations. In order to expose Sheikh Şāhib's lack of knowledge of Arabic, I announced in *Nūr-ul-Ḥaq* that if he publishes within three months a book matching it in every respect, he would be awarded three thousand rupees in cash, and would, in this easy manner, prove my revelations to be false. Otherwise, he would not only be defeated but would be accounted as having acknowledged the truth of my revelations. But Sheikh Şāhib paid no attention to any of this. Why such indifference? The only reason is that it is beyond his capacity to take up my challenge.... God Almighty designed to humiliate this arrogant one and to show him how He helps His servants. These books, therefore, were written through the capacity bestowed by God and His special help and under His direction. I had fixed the end of June 1894 as the last date for the acceptance of my challenge relating to the matching of *Karāmāt-uş-Şādiqīn* and *Nūr-ul-Ḥaq*, and that date is now past.

[*Sirrul-Khilāfah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in* vol. 8, pp. 398-400]

If Ḥaḍrat Sayyed Maulavī Muḥammad Nadhīr Ḥussain Şāhib or Maulavī Abū Muḥammad 'Abd-ul-Ḥaq Şāhib consider that I am mistaken in my view on the question of the death of Jesus, and imagine that my viewpoint goes against the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, it is incumbent upon them that, in order to safeguard the public against being misled by me, they should debate the question with me in this city of Delhi. I propose only three conditions with regard to the holding of the debate.

1. They should assume the responsibility for persuading the authorities to make arrangements for maintaining law and order ... since I am only a visi-

tor in the city and am an object of abuse and vilification at the hands of my Muslim brethren....

2. The debate should be conducted in writing. Each party should draw up and sign its question or answer, as the case may be, in the meeting and deliver it to the other party, as oral statements cannot be preserved accurately....
3. The subject of the debate shall be the life and death of Jesus and neither party shall rely on any authority other than the Holy Qur'ān and the books of Ḥadīth; but *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* shall have priority over other compilations, and *Bukhārī* shall have priority over *Muslim*, since it has been accounted the most accurate book after the Book of God.

I promise that if, through this method, it is proved that Jesus son of Mary is still alive, I shall give up my claim of being a recipient of revelation as I realize that no revelation that is opposed to the Holy Qur'ān can be true.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 234-235]

**In the Name of Allah the Glorious, a Plea to Maulavī
Sayyed Nadhīr Ḥussain, for a Debate on the Life or
Death of Jesus son of Mary**

ندارد کسے با تو ناگفته کار

و لیکن چو گفتی دلیلش بیار²⁴³

Maulavī Sayyed Muḥammad Nadhīr Ḥussain Ṣāhib! You and your disciples have raised a clamour that my claim of being the Promised Messiah is against the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, and that I have invented a new relig-

²⁴³ *Nobody will have anything to do with what you have said not;
Until you produce an argument for what you have said. [Publisher]*

ion and a new doctrine which are altogether opposed to the teachings of God and the Holy Prophet^{sa} and are obviously false, since, according to you, the Holy Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth proclaim that Jesus (peace be upon him) was raised bodily to heaven and will descend on earth some later time, and that the notion that he had died a natural death is opposed to the clear authority of the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth. As you have, in your affirmations, described my claim as opposed to the Holy Qur'ān and the Ḥadīth, as a consequence of which thousands of Muslims have been deeply agitated against me, it is incumbent upon you to settle with me whether in holding such a view I have departed from the authority of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, or whether you are guilty of such departure in professing the opposite view....

If, in a meeting held for the purpose, you refute my arguments, which I shall set forth from the Holy Qur'ān and from the true Aḥādīth, and present better arguments from these two sources in support of the doctrine that Jesus son of Mary was raised bodily up to heaven and continues there alive, I shall repent at your hand and burn all my books which deal with this question and which are in my possession. I shall publish my recantation publicly. *May the curse of Allah be upon him who conceals in his heart that which is opposed to what he professes with his tongue.* But keep in mind that if you are vanquished and fail to cite a conclusive verse or authentic Ḥadīth in support of the doctrine that you profess, you will also have to publicly withdraw from your false belief. *Allah loves those who repent.*

Dear Sir! I put you under oath in the name of God, the Holy and Glorious, Who created you and has bestowed countless favours upon you, that if you truly believe that

the Holy Qur'ān contains clear and categorical verses which prove conclusively that Jesus son of Mary is still alive, and that the verses are supported by true Aḥādīth, on account of which you have been compelled to emphatically deny my claim of being the recipient of Divine revelation, then out of the fear of God in Whose name I call upon you, come forward and debate the question with me....I invite you again, dear sir, in the name of Allah the Glorious, to this debate. I will present myself for this purpose wherever you may wish.... If you do not come forward and try to evade my challenge by relying upon the mischievous clerics, then remember that you will be humiliated and defamed throughout India and the Punjab and will altogether lose the glory of being called the versatile religious scholar....

I wish to add that if you are not prepared to debate this question with me then, in a meeting, listen to all my arguments in support of the death of Jesus^{as} and then proclaim three times on oath in the name of Allah the Glorious, that my arguments are not well-founded and that the true and certain argument is that Jesus son of Mary was raised bodily to heaven and that this indeed is your belief which is supported by clear and conclusive verses of the Holy Qur'ān and true Aḥādīth. Thereupon I shall have recourse to humble and earnest prayer for Divine decree in respect of your daring dishonesty, impertinence and bearing false witness. As God has assured me:

أَدْعُونِي أَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ²⁴⁴

I have also been assured that if you abandon the way of righteousness and commit this impertinence and ignore

²⁴⁴ 'Call on Me, I shall respond to you.' [Publisher]

the verse:

لَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ²⁴⁵

then, within one year, you will be so sorely affected by the consequences of this impertinence that it will be a sign for others. I therefore request you, that if you are not inclined to hold a debate, then at least try to seek a decision in the manner I have suggested so that those who go on calling for a sign may be shown a sign by God Almighty. *He has power to do all that He wills. And our last pronouncement is: All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds.*

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 241-249]

I have written to him²⁴⁶ several times that I do not question any of his beliefs, except that I do not believe, as he does, that Jesus (peace be upon him) is still physically alive. I believe, both as a doctrine and as a fact, that Jesus^{as} died a natural death, and why should I not believe so, because in His Mighty Book, the Holy Qur’ān, my Lord and Master has mentioned him among the dead and there is no mention at all of the extraordinary phenomenon of him being physically alive or of his expected return to earth. The Holy Qur’ān concludes merely with the announcement of his death. Therefore if my statement is vain, false and blasphemous, then he should come and debate the matter with me. If he succeeds in establishing the continuation of the physical life of Jesus (peace be on him) from the Holy Qur’ān and the Aḥādīth I shall discard my belief and shall burn all my books that deal with

²⁴⁵ ‘Follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge.’—Banī Isrā’īl, 17:37. [Publisher]

²⁴⁶ The reference is to Maulavī Nadhīr Ḥussain of Delhi. [Publisher]

this question. I have also suggested that if he is unwilling to debate the question, he should affirm on oath that there is no mention in the Holy Qur'ān of the death of Jesus^{as} but only of his continuous physical life; or that there exists some true Ḥadīth in which the expression *Tawaffi* has been differently interpreted in the case of Jesus^{as} as connoting his physical life. If within one year God Almighty manifests no clear sign to prove that Maulavī Ṣāḥib had taken a false oath, that is to say, if he is not afflicted with some great calamity, I will repent immediately at his hand. Alas, despite my repeated requests, Miān Ṣāḥib was prepared neither to debate the question nor to make the required affirmation on oath; nor did he restrain himself from denouncing me as a disbeliever....

It was only for this purpose that I bore all the expense and inconvenience of staying in Delhi for a whole month, and if Miān Ṣāḥib had been ready for a debate why should I have evaded it? As the saying goes, truth has nothing to fear. I am still as ready for a debate on the subject of the death of Jesus^{as} as I was then. If Miān Ṣāḥib would agree to come to Lahore for this purpose, I would defray the expenses of his journey and can even make payment in advance....If he is not willing to attend the debate in person, the debate can be held in writing and he won't have to take undertake the journey. In short, I am willing to agree to whatever might be convenient to him and I await his reply....But remember my prediction that he will never agree to a debate, and if he does, he will be so humiliated that he will not be able to show his face anywhere.

[Āsmānī Faiṣlah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4 , pp. 315-316]

Let it be understood by all Muslims that it has been established beyond any doubt, according to the Holy

Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, that Jesus son of Mary (peace be upon him) died on earth after fulfilling the span of his life in accordance with the verse:

فِيهَا تَخْيُوتُ وَفِيهَا تَمُوتُونَ²⁴⁷

It is further clear on the authority of sixteen verses of the Holy Qur'ān, and a number of Aḥādīth contained in *Buk-hārī*, *Muslim* and other authentic compilations, that those who die are never sent back to dwell in this world, nor is anyone subjected to death twice, nor does the Holy Qur'ān lay down any law of inheritance for anyone who might return to earth after death. Yet some of the divines insist that Jesus son of Mary has not died but was raised bodily to heaven, and is alive in his physical body. They dare to suggest that the expression *Tawaffī*, which has been applied to Jesus^{as} in the Holy Qur'ān, does not connote death, rather it means taking full possession of both body and soul. But this interpretation is utterly false. In the idiom of the Holy Qur'ān, this expression is consistently employed to connote taking possession of the soul and the death of the body. The same idiom is employed in all the Aḥādīth and sayings of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.)

Ever since the Arabian peninsula has been populated and the Arabic language has come into use, there is not a single ancient or modern instance of the expression *Tawaffī* being employed taking possession of the body. Whenever this expression has been employed for the description of the action of God Almighty in relation to a human being, it has always connoted death and taking

²⁴⁷ 'Therein shall you live, and therein shall you die.'—Al-A'rāf, 7:26 [Publisher]

possession of the soul. No lexicon and no Arabic saying contradicts this. There is not the slightest room for any different interpretation. If anyone should cite a single instance from the Holy Qur'ān or from the Aḥādīth or from ancient or modern poetry, or ode, or prose of the Arabs, wherein the expression *Tawaffī* has been employed when indicating the action of God Almighty concerning a human being, as connoting anything beyond death and taking possession of the soul, that is to say, as connoting the taking possession of the body also, I call God to witness that I shall hand over to such a person one thousand rupees in cash and also acknowledge that he possesses expert knowledge of Ḥadīth and the Holy Qur'ān.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 602-603]

A Misguided Assertion of Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Yūsuf Challenged

In Lahore, Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Yūsuf Ṣāḥib, Dīlā'dār of Canals, under the false doctrines of ignorant and misguided clerics, ... has stated confidently that if anyone falsely claims to be a Prophet or a Messenger or a commissioned one by God, and thus seeks to mislead people, he can survive such imposture for twenty-three years and even more. What he means to say is that the survival of such an impostor for more than twenty-three years cannot be a proof of his truth. He also stated that he can cite the names of many people who made such false claims and continued to assert for more than twenty-three years that they were recipients of God's word....

Through this announcement, I demand from Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Yūsuf Ṣāḥib to cite such an instance as promised in his signed document. I know for certain that this principle, which is set out in the Holy Qur'ān by God

Himself, can never be contravened....

It is for this reason that I have made this public announcement together with an offer of five hundred rupees as an award for the citation of a single instance to the contrary, and I am prepared to deposit this amount in any government bank in advance. If Ḥāfiẓ Muḥammad Yūsuf Ṣāhib and those who think like him, whose names I have mentioned in this announcement, will cite an instance with adequate proof in accordance with the Holy Qur'ān, in which a person who falsely claimed to be a Prophet or a Messenger or a commissioned one of God, continued to publish his alleged revelations for more than twenty-three years, I shall pay such a person the sum of five hundred rupees in cash. They will be at liberty to cite such an instance from anywhere in the world within a fortnight of the publication of this announcement.

[Arba'īn, No. III, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 387-402]

Submitting the Matter to the Judge of Judges

O Ye revered clerics though the falsity of your notion that that you are the true believers and I am a disbeliever, that you are truthful and I am a liar, that you follow Islām and I go against it, that you are the accepted ones of God and I am rejected by Him, that you are the heirs of Paradise and I am condemned to hell, has been established by the Holy Qur'ān in the estimation of those who are given to reflection, and the readers of this book can well understand who is right and who is wrong, yet there is another way whereby distinction can be made between those who are true and those who are false, and between the accepted ones of God and the rejected ones. It has always been the way of God that if an accepted one and a rejected one both beseech God Almighty for heavenly help,

He certainly helps the accepted one and makes His acceptance of him manifest in a manner that is beyond human power. Since you claim to be in the right, and some of you like Maulavī Moḥy-ud-Dīn and ‘Abd-ur-Raḥmān Ṣāḥib of Lakhoke and Miān ‘Abd-ul-Ḥaq Ṣāḥib of Ghaznī have denounced me as a disbeliever and as one condemned to hell, it is incumbent upon you to find out through this heavenly method who is designated as the accepted one in heaven and who is the rejected one. I agree that you should supplicate to the Judge of judges for a period of ten weeks that if you are in the right you should be given a sign of your truth or you should be authorized to make a great prophecy or granted a sign as can proceed only from the righteous. On my side I shall also do the same. God the Beneficent and the Powerful has assured me that, if you accept this challenge, victory will be mine....

*Whatever belonged to us, belong now to the Beloved;
Today, we belong to the Beloved, and He belongs to us.
Thanks be to Allah, we found that Priceless Ruby;
It matters not if the nation's hearts have turned to stone.*

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 3, pp. 457-458]

If those among Muslims who are called hermits, religious elders and sufis continue to persist in their denial of my claim and do not accept the truth that I am the Promised Messiah, then there is an easy way of settling the issue between us. Let a person who does not accept this claim of mine, and considers himself a recipient of revelation, call me to a meeting at Batāla, Amritsar or Lahore, and we should both supplicate the Divine that a grand sign, which is beyond human power and above the manipulation of normal human capacity, may be manifested within the period of one year in support of the one of us

who is true in the estimation of God. That sign should be such as to influence people of diverse temperaments through its splendour and power and brilliance, whether by way of prophecy or some miracle resembling the miracles of the Prophets.

Thereafter the one whose extraordinary prophecy is fulfilled or in whose support a grand sign is manifested within the period of one year with such majesty as is not equalled in the case of his opponent, would be accepted as true. For the sake of removing dissension from among the ranks of Muslims the one who is vanquished must give up his opposition to the other, and should pledge spiritual allegiance to him and should fear God Whose wrath is a consuming fire.

[*Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 15, p. 170]

It has been revealed to me that, on account of the knowledge granted to me through visions and revelations, I have supremacy over those among the Muslims who claim to be the recipients of revelation. These people should stand up against me. If they are found superior to me in respect of Divine support, heavenly grace and signs, I would submit to being carved up with whatever dagger they might choose. If they dare not compete with me in this manner, then those of them who have denounced me as a disbeliever and whom I am addressing under Divine direction, should publicly state in writing and announce that if they witness any extraordinary sign they would accept my claim without hesitation. I am ready for such a test and my Beneficent God is with me; but I have been directed that, for this purpose, I should challenge only the leaders from among those who denounce me as a disbeliever and that I should enter into a prayer-duel only with them. It should,

however, be remembered that they will not stand forth against me as their hearts stand in awe of the truth, and they are well aware of their wrongdoing and transgression.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 348-349]

Challenge to Reach a Conclusive Settlement

It is a wonderful manifestation of the Divine that the more the opposing Maulavīs try to reduce our numbers and the more they try to stop people from joining our Movement, the more of them join it, so that we are now well in our thousands. This process goes on daily with increasing speed and God Almighty goes on pulling out good plants from the other side and planting them in our garden. We enjoy Divine support increasingly, on the basis of authority, reason and heavenly testimony. If the opposing clerics still imagine that they are in the right and we are in the wrong, and that God is with them and that we are under the curse and wrath of God, then, besides the fact that we have already furnished them with conclusive proofs, we are willing to provide them with another opportunity of distinguishing between truth and falsehood. If they truly consider themselves in the right and imagine that we are in the wrong, and they desire that the truth may be made manifest and falsehood may disappear, then let them adopt the following method. They should pray:

Lord, if this person, who claims to be the Promised Messiah, is false and a liar and an impostor in Your estimation, and if we are right in our stand and are truthful and are Your accepted servants, then do manifest within one year some extraordinary sign in our support.

On my side I shall supplicate:

Lord, if You know that I am from You and am truly the Promised Messiah, then do You manifest another sign by way of prophecy in my support within one year.

Thereafter if a sign is manifested in their support and nothing is manifested in my support I will be considered a liar. But if something is manifested in my support and something of the same type is manifested in their support, in that event also I shall be accounted false. But if within one year a clear sign is manifested in my support and none is manifested in their support, I shall be deemed true.

The condition will be that if the opposing party is found to be true according to the explanation set out above, I shall give up my claims and shall burn all those books of mine in which my claims and revelations are set out, for if God should prove me false I cannot regard those books as pure and holy....If God does not desire to bestow honour on me let there be a curse on me if I act contrary to that which I have just stated. But if, in accord with the explanations set out above, God proves me true, then Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batāla, ‘Abd-ul-Ḥaḳ and ‘Abdul Jabbār of Ghaznī, and Rashīd Aḥmad of Gangoha should repent at my hands, confirm the truth of my claims, and join my Jamā‘at so that this discussion may be put to an end. Internal feuds have ruined the Muslims. This will be a simple and straightforward verdict of God which will not leave any room for either side to prevaricate.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, p. 411]

A Sincere Appeal to All Muslims of India

To all the Muslims of India, i.e., to all the different sects

of Islām which are to be found in India.

Brethren in faith and followers of the Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him!) Although I have already addressed many writings to the clerics and sufis, and have conveyed my message to them fully, it has occurred to me that I should make a general announcement to convey my message clearly to you so that I may discharge my responsibility fully in this respect. Brethren, I wish to convey to you that I indeed am the Promised Reformer, whose advent was to take place at the beginning of the fourteenth century and about whom a large number of righteous people, who were recipients of Divine revelations, had foretold that he would be the Promised Messiah...

Should you be in doubt in this respect, I would suggest to you an easy way of settling this matter: Every one of you should ask his spiritual guide to stand forth in opposition to me in the matter of the manifestation of signs of righteousness. Be sure, in such a case that spiritual guide would be humiliated even more than Bal‘am was humiliated when he stood against Moses^{as}. If he does not wish to stand forth in opposition and seeks the truth, God Almighty will, at his request and on his coming to me, manifest some sign for him provided that, in that case, he is ready to join my Jamā‘at. If, after the publication of this announcement, your spiritual preceptors and religious leaders and jurist do not desist from speaking ill of me and denouncing me as a disbeliever, and do not accept my truth and continue to evade such confrontation as I have suggested, then take note that I call God Almighty to witness that they will be humiliated by Him.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 436-438]

Gentlemen! Listen carefully to what I have to say. I state on oath, in the name of Allah the Glorious, that if Ḥaḍrat Maulavī Muḥammad Ḥussain Ṣāḥib would address himself to God Almighty for forty days in opposition to me, and would manifest such heavenly signs or such realities of the unseen as I might manifest, I would agree that he may slay me with the weapon of his choice and mulct me in such sum as he might determine.

A Warner came to the world and the world did not accept him; but God will accept him and will establish his truth with powerful assaults.

[Al-Ḥaq, Mubāḥatha Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 124]

I announce in the name of Him in whose hand lies my life, that if you people clear your minds and wish to see another Divine sign, then the All-Powerful God, without being subject to your demand, has the power to manifest a sign out of His own will and authority. I am certain that if you repent sincerely, and demand a sign from me and promise God that if some extraordinary sign, which is beyond human power, is manifested, you will discard all ill-will and rancour, and, seeking only the pleasure of God, will make the pledge of allegiance to me, surely God Almighty will manifest some sign, for He is Merciful and Beneficent. But I do not have the choice to appoint two or three days for the manifestation of a sign or to follow your desires. It is at the choice of God Almighty to appoint whatever date pleases Him....

For the adoption of this method it will be necessary that at least forty leading Maulavīs like Maulavī Muḥammad Ḥussain Ṣāḥib of Batāla, Maulavī Nadhīr Ḥussain Ṣāḥib of Delhi, Maulavī ‘Abdul Jabbār Ṣāḥib of Ghaznī, now of Amritsar, Maulavī Rashīd Aḥmad Ṣāḥib of Ghangoḥa,

and Maulavī Pīr Mehr ‘Alī Shāh Ṣāhib of Golrah should publish an agreement in a newspaper attested by fifty respectable Muslims that if a sign, which is truly extraordinary, is manifested, they will give up their opposition out of the fear of God the Glorious, and will make the pledge of allegiance to me.

Should this method be unacceptable...there is another simpler and easier method....It is that, purely out of fear of God Almighty and out of mercy for the Muslims, you should call a meeting in Batāla, Amritsar or Lahore. This meeting should be attended, as far as may be possible, by a large number of respected divines and men of the world. I shall also attend with a number of my followers. Then all of them should supplicate thus:

Lord, if You know that this person is an impostor and is not from You, and is neither the Promised Messiah nor the Mahdī, then may You remove this cause of dissension from among the Muslims and safeguard Islām and the Muslims against his mischief, as You did safeguard the Muslims against the mischief of Musailama Kadhkhāb and Aswad ‘Ansī by removing them from the world, but if he is from You and our minds and intellects are at fault, then may You Powerful One bestow understanding upon us so that we may not be ruined, and make manifest such matters and signs in his support that we should be satisfied that he is from You.

When this supplication is made, my followers and I will say Āmīn aloud. After that, I shall pray, holding in my hand all those revelations that I have set out....I will pray as follows:

Lord, if these revelations, which are mentioned in this pamphlet that I hold in my hand, and on the basis of

which I consider myself the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, and hold Jesus^{as} to be dead, are not Your words, and if, in Your estimation, I am a liar and impostor and dajjāl who is the cause of dissension among the Muslims, and if I am under Your wrath, I supplicate You earnestly that within one year from this date You cross out my name from among the living and ruin all my enterprises and wipe out my every sign from the earth. But if I am from You and these revelations which I hold in my hand are from You and I am a recipient of Your grace, then O Mighty Benefactor, cause my Jamā‘at to grow in an extraordinary manner in the coming year and bestow extraordinary blessings upon us, and bless my life and send down Your heavenly support.

When this supplication is finished, all opponents should say Āmīn. It would be proper that everyone should come to this meeting for the purpose of prayer with pure and serene hearts and not in a spirit of victory or defeat. This prayer should not be considered a *Mubāhalah* [prayer-duel] because its benefit or harm is limited to me alone....The prayer should be offered with concentration and great earnestness. Sincere prayer finds acceptance with God. If all my enterprise is not in the cause of God and is an imposture and a show, the prayers of representative Muslims will soon be heard. But if my Movement is heavenly and has been initiated by God Himself, my supplication will be accepted. O you men of honour! Respond to this request of mine. There is no need for a large gathering, it would be enough if forty representative divines were to take part in the prayer. But they should not be less than forty, for this number has a blessed connection with the acceptance of prayer.

[Arba‘īn, No. II Rūḥānī Khazā‘īn, vol. 17, pp. 374-378]

Challenge to those who Claim Divine Revelation

...If someone who claims to be the recipient of revelation is not satisfied with any of these signs, he is free to adopt another method. He should, on his side, continue to publish his revelations for a period of one year in two newspapers of his people, and, on my side, I shall publish all that is revealed to me by God Almighty in two newspapers of my Jamā'at. The only condition which is binding on both sides is that each of the revelations published should relate to matters unseen and such as are beyond human power. After one year, the judges will decide whose prophecies have been fulfilled and which side has the larger number of the required type of revelations to its credit. If my opponent is declared supreme in this test, I will be considered false; otherwise it will be incumbent upon my opponents at every step to fear God Almighty, give up denouncing me as false and denying my truth and not to ruin their afterlife by opposing one who has been sent by God.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 400-401]

Holy Qur'ān — A Sign of the Living God

I once again remind every seeker after truth that I have been given signs and heavenly testimonies of the truth of Islām of which our blind divines are unaware. I have been sent to establish that Islām alone is the living faith. I have been bestowed such miracles as cannot be matched by the followers of other religions and by my Muslim opponents. I can demonstrate to every opponent that the **Holy Qur'ān**, by virtue of its teachings, philosophy, deep insights and perfect composition is a far greater miracle than that of Moses^{as} and is hundreds of times superior to the miracles of Jesus.

I say again and again, loud and clear, that true love for the **Holy Qur'ān** and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), and following them with sincerity, enables a man to perform miracles. Such a perfect man is given knowledge of the unseen and no follower of any other religion can match him in spiritual blessings. **I have personal experience of these matters** and I see that, except Islām, all religions, their gods, and their followers, are dead, and it is not possible to establish a living relationship with God Almighty except by accepting Islām.

O ye foolish ones! What do you gain by worshipping the dead, and what pleasure do you derive from eating carrion? **Come to me and I will tell you where and with whom the Living God is. He is with Islām.** In this age, Islām is the Mount Sinai of Moses^{as} where God speaks. The God Who used to converse with Prophets and became silent is now revealing His words upon the heart of **a Muslim**. Does none of you wish to test this and accept the truth if he finds it? What are you holding on to: a corpse wrapped up in a shroud? What more do you possess? A handful of dust? Can that corpse be God? Can it answer you? Come forward. Shame on you if you fail to respond and compare this decomposed corpse with my God.

I tell you that before forty days have passed, He will put you to shame through heavenly signs. Polluted are the hearts that do not approach with true intent and yet go on denying, and unclean are the temperaments that lean towards mischief and not towards the pursuit of truth.

O clerics who oppose me! If you be in doubt, come and stay in my company for a few days. If you do not witness

God's signs, then seize me and treat me as a liar. I have furnished you with full proofs, and until you refute these proofs you have no answer. The signs of God are descending like rain. Is there no one among you who would come to me with a true heart? Not even one?

A Warner came to the world and the world did not accept him. But God will accept him and will establish his truth with powerful assaults.

Peace be on him who follows the guidance.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 345-347]

This is to announce that the author of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* has been commissioned by the All-Powerful One, glory be to Him, to strive for the reform of mankind in perfect humility, meekness and courtesy in the manner of the Israeli Prophet of Nazareth, and to lead those who are unaware of the straight path to the path along which a person attains true salvation and experiences in this very life the qualities of heavenly life, and the lights of acceptance by God and His love. It is for this purpose that the book *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* has been compiled....As the compilation of the book will take a long time, it has been decided that—to bring the argument to a conclusion—at this stage a copy of this letter...be despatched to the revered Christian padres of Punjab, India, Britain and other countries which can be reached by the mail, who are considered outstanding and exalted among their respective peoples, and it will also be despatched to leading Brahmins, Āryās, rationalists and respected Maulavīs (who deny miracles and for this reason consider the author misguided.)

This plan has been adopted not by the author's own thinking and deliberation, but under the Divine

permission. I have been given Divine assurance that the addressees of this letter, who do not turn to the truth after receiving it, will be accountable to God and will be deemed to have been vanquished. This printed letter is sent to you because you are well known among your people, and are held in respect and have a following. It is hoped that, because of your learning and the high esteem in which you are held, you will pay attention, for the sake of God, to the contents of this letter and will strive to seek the truth. If you do not pay attention to this letter the author will be deemed to have discharged his duty, and a full account of the despatch of this letter to you by registered post and your indifference to it will be published in part V of the book.

The message of this letter, which I am commissioned to convey to you, is that Islām alone is the true faith that is in accord with Divine will, and that the Holy Qur'ān is the true Divine Book which alone is safeguarded and must be followed. The truth of Islām and of the Holy Qur'ān is supported not only by logical arguments, but also by testimony of heavenly signs and prophecies, which can be witnessed by a seeker after truth who is prepared to spend some time in the company of this humble self, the author of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*. Should you doubt the truth of Islām or of these heavenly signs, you are invited, as a sincere seeker after truth, to come to Qādiān and witness the signs by staying in the company of the author for one year, on the condition, which would be a guarantee of search for the truth, that having witnessed heavenly signs you will announce from Qādiān itself your acceptance of Islām or, at least, your testimony of having witnessed these extraordinary signs. If you come with this purpose in mind, you will certainly wit-

ness heavenly signs, if God Almighty so wills. This is a Divine promise that is bound to be fulfilled. If you do not come, you will be accountable to God, and after waiting for three months an account of your indifference will be set out in part V of the book. If you come and stay for a year and witness no heavenly sign, you will be paid compensation at the rate of two hundred rupees a month. If you consider this sum inadequate, we shall agree to pay you such amount as you may consider adequate, as a compensation for your wasted time or as a fine for our not keeping our promise, provided that it is within our means. Anyone who requires compensation must first seek our consent by means of a registered letter beforehand. A person who does not seek compensation will not need such permission. If you cannot come in person, you may appoint, as your representative, someone whose observation you can trust and can accept as your own, to come in your place; but on the condition that, after the confirmation of your representative, you will not delay your acceptance of Islām or your confirmation of the extraordinary signs. You can set down your announcement on a simple sheet of paper, and a few respectable followers of different religions should testify it to. It will be published in a number of Urdu and English newspapers. We are willing to register our liability to pay compensation as set out above with a guarantee of a proportionate amount of our property.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 20-22]

For Followers of Revealed Books who Deny the Truth of the Holy Qur'ān

I, the author of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, announce an award of ten thousand rupees on the following conditions. This announcement is addressed to all the fol-

lowers of such religions as deny the truth of the Holy Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet Muḥammad, the Chosen One (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) To win the award, a candidate should set forth from the revealed book in which he believes, all the arguments and proofs which we have entered in this book in support of the truth of the Holy Qur'ān and the Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), all of which are derived from the Holy Qur'ān itself. If he is unable to set out an equal number of arguments and proofs from the revealed book of his religion, he should set out at least one half or one third or one quarter or one fifth of them. Should he be unable to set out anything at all matching our arguments and proofs he should refute our arguments and proofs one by one. Then on the certification of three just minded persons, agreed to by the parties, that the conditions set out above have been fulfilled, I shall, without hesitation, transfer to the successful candidate my property worth ten thousand rupees. It must, however, be made clear that if any of the opponents is unable to set out the required number of arguments and proofs from the revealed book in which he believes, or is unable to offer at least one fifth of the arguments and proofs, as required in the announcement, he would have to declare in writing that he is unable to do so because of the imperfection or unreasonableness of that book. If he sets out the required arguments and proofs from that revealed book numbering one fifth of our arguments and proofs, he would have to set out one half, one third, one quarter or one fifth of each of type of argument that we have set out and not merely one half, one third, one fourth,

one fifth of the total number set out by us.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 24-31]

Evidence in the form of Countless Signs

Up to this day... Friday 22nd September 1893... more than three thousand signs have been manifested through me, which have been witnessed by hundreds of people. Thousands of Hindus, Christians and followers of other religions have witnessed the fulfilment of some of my prophecies....There are about sixteen thousand people in India, Britain, Germany, France, Russia and Italy, who include Pundits, Jewish scribes, leaders of Zoroastrians, Christian Ministers, Clerics and Bishops, to whom registered letters have been sent to the effect that Islām alone is the true religion and all other religions have drifted far away from the truth. These letters also contained an offer that if anyone of our opponents doubts my statement, he should come and stay with me for one year and witness the signs of Islām at my hands. If I turned out to be wrong, he would be paid compensation at the rate of two hundred rupees a month. And if I am proven right I would demand nothing from him except that he should become a Muslim. I even offered to deposit the amount of compensation in advance, but no one paid any attention to my offer....

The validity of my statement might be determined by inquiring from some Christian minister whether he has received such a registered letter conveying the message of Islām or not....Letters and announcements containing the message of Islām have also been despatched to the members of British Parliament and Prince of Wales.... as testified by postal receipts I have in my possession.

[Shahādat-ul-Qur'ān, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 369-371]

I have been informed categorically that if any opponent of Islām confronts me, I will be supreme and he will be humiliated. Why then do those who call themselves Muslims and doubt my truth not arrange for some Christian minister to stand up against me. Let them tell some Christian minister or a Hindu pundit that I am an impostor and assure him that no harm will come to him if he confronts me. Then God Almighty will Himself decide between us. If I am proved to be wrong I will transfer all the property that I have inherited to such Christian minister or Hindu Pundit. If he turns out to be false, I will require nothing from him but that he should become a Muslim.

I make this offer in full sincerity and affirm in the name of Allah the Glorious, that I am ready for such a contest. I have issued twelve thousand announcements to this effect but no pundit or minister has come forward in good faith. What greater proof can there be of my truth than that I am always ready for such a contest? If the opposing pundit or minister is not ready to show any sign, he can simply announce through some newspaper that he is ready to witness such a sign and that if such a sign does appear and he is not able to match it, he will immediately accept Islām. I will be more than willing to abide by such a plan. Let someone from among the Muslims step forward with the courage to test, in this manner, the truth of a person whom they denounce as a disbeliever and irreligious person. Then witness the resulting drama.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p.348]

Manifestation of the Power of the Living God, Honour of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and Truth of the Holy Qur'ān

One of the powerful qualities of the Holy Qur'ān is that its true follower is able to work miracles and manifest extraordinary signs in such large numbers that no one can match him in this respect. I too claim that if all my opponents from east and west come together and compete with me in the matter of signs and miracles, I will, by the grace of God Almighty, and through the power bestowed by Him, be supreme over all of them. This supremacy will not be due to any superior spiritual power of mine, but because God has desired that I should furnish proof of the great power of His Holy Word, the Qur'ān, and of the spiritual power and high rank of His Messenger Muḥammad, the Chosen One (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.) He has of His grace, and not on account of any merit of mine, enabled me to follow His Glorious Prophet and His Supreme Word and to love them both. I believe in the Word of God, the Holy Qur'ān, which is a manifestation of Divine power. God Almighty has bestowed all this upon me in accordance with the promises held out in the Holy Qur'ān:

لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا²⁴⁸
أَيَّدَهُم بِرُوحٍ مِنْهُ²⁴⁹
يَجْعَلُ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا²⁵⁰

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 409-410]

²⁴⁸ 'For them are glad tidings in the present life.'—Yūnus, 10:65 [Publisher]

²⁴⁹ 'Whom He has strengthened with inspiration from Himself.'—Al-Mujādalah, 58:23 [Publisher]

²⁵⁰ 'He will grant you a distinction.'—Al-Anfāl, 8:30 [Publisher]

If all nations of the world should unite against me and a test were made to whom God reveals the unseen, whose prayers does He accept, whom does He help and for whom does He manifest great signs, I affirm, in the name of God, that I would emerge supreme. Is there anyone who will step forth against me for such a trial? God has bestowed thousands of signs upon me to let my opponents know that Islām is indeed the true faith. I seek no honour for myself, but only the honour of that for which I have been sent.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 181-182]

A living faith is one through which we can find the Living God, and the Living God is He Who sends revelation to us directly or, at least, enables us to meet a person who is the recipient of direct revelation. I, therefore, convey to the whole world the good news that the God of Islām is such a Living God. Those with whom no one can now converse, and whose signs no one can see, are dead, not gods.... A true religion can never become a mere tale, and Islām is a true religion. I intend to demonstrate the truth of Islām to every person, whether he is a Christian, Āryā, Jew or Brahmu. Is there anyone who wants to see the Living God? We do not worship the dead. Our God is Living and helps us with His revelation, His converse and His heavenly signs. If there is a single Christian in the world who is a sincere seeker after truth, let him compare his dead god with our Living God. I affirm truly that forty days would be enough for such a test....If I am found to be false I will accept every punishment. But this test will be through prayer. The person whose God is True will doubtlessly emerge truthful. God will certainly make me supreme in such a contest....I am willing to agree to any reasonable condition for such a test. I stand

in the field of contest and proclaim that the God of Islām is the only Living God. The Christians have only a dead god in their hands. Let the person who wishes to test this, come forward and stand up against me.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 311-313]

One method with which I have fulfilled my duty vis-à-vis all opposing religions, is that I have proclaimed publicly that heavenly signs, Divine blessings and God's powerful works are found only in Islām and that there is no religion which can stand up to Islām in respect of such signs. God Almighty has sent me forward for the purpose of refuting all opponents. I know for certain that there is no one among the Hindus, Christians and Sikhs who can compete with me in respect of heavenly signs and blessings and acceptance of prayers. Obviously, the only living faith would be the one which is supported by heavenly signs and is distinguished by the light that shines upon it, and that faith is none other than Islām. Is there anyone among the Christians, Sikhs or Hindus who can challenge me in this respect? It is enough proof of my truth that **no one can stand up to me**. Now you can satisfy yourselves in any way you want.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 248-249]

Refutation of the Āryās' False Doctrines

This book, *Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā*, has been written for the purpose of the debate with Lāla Murlīdhar Śāḥib, drawing master, of Hoshiārpur, and it utterly refutes the false doctrines of the Vedas. It has been written with the certainty that no Āryā can refute it, as falsehood can never withstand the truth. If any Āryā gentleman still considers the principles and doctrines of the Vedas which have been refuted in this book to be true, and believes in

the Vedas and their principles as Divine revelation, I call upon him, in the name of Ishwar, to write a refutation of my book and receive five hundred rupees as an award. This award will be made on the certificate of an arbitrator who should be a Christian minister or a Brahmu.

I would even agree if, after the publication of the refutation of my book by such an Āryā, Munshī Jīwan Dās Ṣāḥib, Secretary Āryā Samāj, Lahore, who is the most respected gentleman from among the Āryās of our neighbourhood, would attend along with his sons a public meeting of the Muslim, Āryā and Christian divines, and affirm on oath that all the criticism raised in my book *Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā*, which he has read carefully and understood, has been totally refuted in the reply of the Āryā writer, and that if his affirmation is not made in full sincerity and truth, may he and his sons, who are present with him, be called to account in this very life. If this is done, the writer of the refutation would be awarded five hundred rupees in cash simply on the testimony of the said Munshī Ṣāḥib. If the Munshī Ṣāḥib does not suffer from any ill effects within one year in consequence of his oath, the Āryās would be entitled to claim that he had made his affirmation sincerely according to his knowledge and understanding.

Peace be on him who follows the guidance.

Announced by:
Ghulām Aḥmad
Qādiān,
Distt. Gurdāspūr, Punjab.

[*Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā*, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 321-322]

Announcement for a Forty Day Prayer Vigil

گرچہ ہرکس زرہ لاف بیانے دارد

صادق آنست کہ از صدق نشانے دارد²⁵¹

Those who have read my previous announcements will be aware of my announcement that if a respectable Āryā gentleman, Christian minister or some other gentleman out of the opponents of Islām were to come and stay with me at Qādiān for one year, and did not witness any heavenly sign during that time, I would pay him two thousand four hundred rupees by way of compensation.

I despatched this offer by registered post to all the principal Christian ministers and leading Āryā gentlemen, but none of them came to Qādiān. In the case of Munshī Inderman Šāhib, I sent that amount in cash to Lahore to satisfy him that the money would be available for the award, but he slipped away to Farīdkot. One gentleman by the name of Lekh Rām of Peshawar did come to Qādiān, and he was repeatedly invited to stay here for one year on payment of his expenses at the rate of twice the salary which he received when he was a government servant at Peshawar; and in the end it was even suggested that if he could not stay at Qādiān for a whole year he should at least stay for forty days. He rejected both propositions, and yet made several false allegations in his announcements. In *Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā*, he has again been invited to come and stay at Qādiān for forty days. Everyone can read it there.

The the purpose of this announcement is to carry the

²⁵¹ *Anyone can issue a statement by way of boasting,*

But truthful is the one who produces a true sign. [Publisher]

matter to its limit vis-à-vis Munshī Jīwan Dās Ṣāḥib who, from among the Āryās, appears to be a most decent and gentle person, and Lāla Murlīdhar Ṣāḥib, drawing master, of Hoshiārpur, who I also believe to be one of the better type of Āryās, and Munshī Inderman Ṣāḥib of Murādabad who is, as it were, the joint founder of the Āryā Samāj and Mr. ‘Abdullāh Ātham, formerly Extra Assistant Commissioner from Amritsar who is a decent and gentle minded Christian, the Reverend ‘Imād-ud-Dīn of Amritsar, and Reverend Thākar Dās Ṣāḥib, the author of *Izhār-e-‘Īswī*.

I now reduce the period of one year to forty days on the condition that the gentleman who is willing to take up the challenge should stay with me throughout the period of forty days at Qādiān or at any other place where I may be residing. If, during that time, I put forward no extraordinary prophecy, or the prophecy proves to be wrong, or, if it is not proved wrong but the gentleman is able to match it, he will immediately be awarded five hundred rupees. But if such a prophecy is fulfilled, the gentleman making the trial would have to accept Islām.... If the gentleman has doubts about the prophecy, or if he thinks it is only a matter of guess work, he may himself make such a prophecy within forty days and prove that it has been fulfilled. If he fails to do so and my prophecy is fulfilled, then he will have to accept Islām. All this will be committed to writing and attested to by both sides.

These gentlemen are granted three months from the date of the publication of this book, i.e., 20th September 1886, within which to respond to this invitation. If no fair response is received from any of them during this time, it will be understood that they have evaded the contest.

Peace be on those who follow the guidance.

Announced by: Ghulām Aḥmad From Qādiān,

Distt. Gurdāspūr, Punjab.

[Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 309-310]

محال است سعدی کہ راہ صفا

توان یافت جز در پئے مصطفیٰ²⁵²

For the Careful Attention of Sardār Rāj Indar Singh

I have received your pamphlet which you have entitled '*Remedy for the Obsession of the Qādiānī*'. Not knowing what to do in answer to your abuse, insult, and all the calumnies you have directed against our lord and master, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā, Aḥmad Mujtabā (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), I commit this matter to the Mighty and Powerful One, Who is protective of the honour of his loved ones. I feel all the more sorry for you in view of the fact that my book *Sat Bachan* was couched in terms of extreme respect and courtesy, and I had described Bābā Nānak in reverent terms, for which you have ill requited me....

You have heaped vile abuse upon the Holy Loved One of God who, for the sake of the honour and glory of God, did not value his own life as more than the life of an insect and endured a thousand deaths in that cause, and you have denigrated him in various ways. I had not imagined that there were such people among the Sikhs. The sun, in your estimation, appears as a thing of no value. O ignorant one, you have slighted the light that illumined the

²⁵² *Sa'dī, it is impossible that the right path;*

Be obtained except in the footsteps of the Muṣṭafā^{sa}. [Publisher]

world at a time when it had sunk in darkness, and revived it after it was dead. All Prophethoods were established through him.... Hearken! I bear witness that Islām is the bright religion that manifests Divine support all the time. How great is the Messenger from whom we receive light afresh, and how exalted is the Prophet for whose love we perceive the holy spirit dwelling within us. That is how our supplications are accepted and we are able to work wonders. We experience the Living God in this faith. All other faiths are but the worship of the dead.

Where are the worshippers of the dead? Can they speak? Where are the worshippers of creatures? Can they stand up against us? Where are those who claimed mischievously that no prophecy of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was ever fulfilled, and that he did not show any sign? They will all be put to shame and will seek to hide themselves but will find no place to hide; for the time has come when the light of the truth of Islām will strike the faces of the disbelievers.

I have seen Bābā Nānak Ṣāḥib twice in my visions. He acknowledged that he had obtained light from the same source. Vain talk and falsehood are the characteristics of those who swallow carrion; I have stated only that which I have seen. That is why I hold Bābā Nānak Ṣāḥib in high esteem, as I know that he drank from the same spring from which we drink. God Almighty knows that I speak out of the comprehension which has been bestowed upon me.

If you deny that Bābā Ṣāḥib was a Muslim and insist that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was—God forbid—a wicked person, I will not attempt to persuade you through reason and logic, but I put

forward another method of settlement through Divine intervention....

I propose that you should state on oath, in a public gathering, that Bābā Nānak was disgusted with Islām and esteemed the Prophet of Islām an evil man and that in truth he was (God forbid) wicked and vicious and was not a true Prophet. You should then supplicate:

‘If these two statements of mine are false, then do
You, O Mighty Kartār, inflict severe punishment on
me for this impertinence within one year.’

Once you have made this statement and supplication, we shall deposit five hundred rupees wherever you may desire. If you are true in your affirmation, you will suffer no harm whatsoever within one year and the amount of five hundred rupees will be paid over to you, and I will be disgraced and humiliated. But, on the other hand, if some punishment does come down upon you, all Sikhs will be guided to the truth.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 394-399]

Announcement on the Death of Lekh Rām

I affirm truly and on oath that I bear no enmity towards any people; I only desire to correct them in their beliefs, as far as it is possible for me. If someone insults me, my complaint is addressed to God and not to any court. I am inspired with sympathy for all men. I do not know how and in what words to satisfy Āryā gentlemen that recourse to mischief is not my way. I am distressed by the loss of human life but I am also pleased with the fulfilment of a Divine prophecy. I am pleased only because I desire the good of mankind. I would wish them to reflect that it is not possible for a human being, on his own, to predict such an event so clearly years in advance.

My heart is both distressed and pleased at this moment. I am distressed that if Lekh Rām had, at least, restrained himself from vilification, I would have supplicated on his behalf and would have hoped that, even if he had been cut to pieces, he would have survived. Nothing is impossible for the God Whom I know. On the other hand, I am happy that the prophecy has been so clearly fulfilled....

If anyone still entertains doubts and considers me a party to the conspiracy of slaying Lekh Rām, as some Hindu papers have alleged, I have a very effective way of settling the whole matter: Such a person should state on oath in my presence that:

I am certain that this man was party to the conspiracy of murder, or the murder was committed under his direction. If this statement of mine is not true, may You, O Mighty God, afflict me within the period of one year with such terrible torment as should not proceed from human hands nor be suspected of having been brought about by human design.

If thereafter such a person should survive for a whole year without being afflicted, as mentioned in the supplication, I may be deemed guilty and condemned to suffer the punishment of murder. If there is any Āryā who is brave enough to try and relieve the whole world of its suspicions, let him adopt this method, which is quite simple and straightforward.

[Sirāj-e-Munīr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, pp. 28-29]

Real Test between Islām and Christianity

Both Christians and Muslims claim that they possess faith and live righteous lives. The question is, which of the two claims is true in the eyes of God, i.e., whose faith is acceptable to God and whose life is truly righteous,

and, on the other hand, whose faith is mere satanic illusion and whose claim of righteous life is a blind fantasy. I believe that only that faith is true and acceptable to God which is supported by heavenly testimony and which shows signs of its acceptability to God; and only a life that is marked by heavenly signs can be accepted as righteous. If a mere claim were to be accepted, all people claim that many righteous ones have lived among them in the past and are present among them even today, and they cite examples of their works and miracles, the reality of which is difficult to ascertain. So if the Christians imagine that belief in the atonement of Jesus bestows holy faith and a righteous life, they should come forward and compete with me in the matter of acceptance of prayer and the manifestation of heavenly signs. If their lives are proven to be righteous by the testimony of heavenly signs, I then deserve every punishment and every type of disgrace.

I declare emphatically that, according to spiritual standards, the life of the Christians is utterly vile, and the God of Holiness, Who is the Lord of heaven and earth, is as disgusted with their beliefs as we are disgusted with decomposed carrion. If I am false in this assertion, and do not have the support of God in making it, then let them settle with me in a gentle and courteous manner. I affirm again that the Christians certainly do not enjoy that righteous life which descends from heaven and illumines the hearts. It is true, as I have already stated, that some of them are good by nature, as indeed are some people from other faiths, but such natural decency is not what I am talking about now; because such people are to be found among every people, including the low castes. What I am speaking of here is the heavenly and righteous

life which is achieved through God's loving Word and descends from heaven and is accompanied by heavenly signs. Such life is not to be found among the Christians.

[*Sirāj-ud-Dīn 'Īsā'ī ke Chār Sawāloñ kā Jawāb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, pp. 342-344*]

I have repeatedly invited Christian ministers, not by the sword, but with courteous words, that they should come and settle with me which of the two, Jesus or our Holy Prophet Muṣṭafā (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) is alive by virtue of his spiritual blessings and grace. If it were proved that Jesus is the son of God, I would, in the words of the Holy Qur'ān, be the first to worship him. O Ye Christian clerics of Europe and America, why do you raise such clamour? You know that I am known to millions of people. Come forward and compete with me. If, within one year, Divine signs and such prophecies as illustrate the Might and Power of God are manifested at your hands, and I am not proven to be your match, I shall acknowledge Jesus, son of Mary, to be God. But if the True God, Whom I know and you do not know, makes me supreme and your religion is proven to be bereft of heavenly signs, it will be incumbent upon you to accept Islām.

[*Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, p. 160*]

I say with full confidence, and God Almighty knows that I am true in my claim, and my truth has been established by experience and a great number of signs, that if Jesus is the living God and is the redeemer of the bearers of his cross, and accepts their prayers (although his own prayer was not accepted), then let a Christian priest or monk come forward and exhibit some extraordinary sign with the help and support of Jesus. I stand in the field of contest and affirm truly that I can behold my God. He is

always before me and with me. I proclaim that Jesus has no superiority over me as I represent the light of Muḥammad^{sa}, which always exhibits the signs of life. What more is needed?

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, pp. 124-125]

An Invitation to All Good People

The manner in which the Christian clergymen have raised varied objections against Islām, have changed their theories about, and have retrieved their earlier statements in great humiliation, is well known to anyone who has made a comprehensive review of the discussions between them and Muslim scholars. Their objections are of three types. One, such as are altogether false and are baseless calumnies; there is nothing to support their authenticity. Two, such as are based upon matters that are authentic, but are not open to objection or criticism; they have been made a target of criticism out of simple-mindedness, lack of reflection, or inner blindness. Three, such objections as are a mixture of that which is true and unobjectionable, and of that which is false and slanderous.... Some Āryās are also in the habit of presenting criticism based on a defective translation of some verse of the Holy Qur'ān, or based on some meaningless tale heard from some ignorant or hostile person....

It is in view of such criticism that I hereby make this announcement. All the principles and teachings set out in the Holy Qur'ān are replete with wisdom, insight and truth and not the least part of any of them is open to criticism. As the principles and teachings of every religion comprise hundreds of details and a discussion of all of them would take a long time, I would make this suggestion in good faith to those who deny the principles set

out in the Holy Qur'ān. They should, after careful study, set forth two or three basic objections, derived from the verses of the Holy Qur'ān, which in their estimation are objections of the strongest, firmest and the highest grade, and which they believe cannot be refuted or dispelled. Those objections should be treated as the basic test, which would be decisive of all other objections. If the basic objections are totally refuted, smaller objections would automatically fall. If we are unable to reply in a satisfactory manner to those objections, and fail to establish that the principles and teachings which the opposite party upholds in contrast to the principles and teachings that are objected to are, in comparison, of much lower standard and are bereft of truth, then the opposite party will be paid the sum of fifty rupees in respect of each such objection. But if our opponent is proved false and fails to establish that the principles and teachings that he believes in possess all those qualities that are possessed by the principles and teachings of Islām, and which we shall set forth, he will have to become a Muslim. He will first have to agree to this condition on oath. Thereafter we shall publish a pamphlet refuting his objections. He would also be obliged to publish a pamphlet refuting our objections to the principles and teachings in which he believes. After the publication of both these pamphlets, a decision shall be arrived at, either through an umpire or by oath, whichever method is agreed upon. It is, however, necessary that the opposite party should be a well known cleric who is well versed in the scripture of his faith and should be capable of writing a reply based on that scripture, so that our time may not be wasted....

We shall await a response from some Hindu pundit or Christian cleric to this announcement for three months

after the 20th September 1886. If no one from among the Āryās or Christians comes forward within that time, their silence will be a proof of their defeat.

[Surmah Chashm-e-Āryā, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, pp. 312-314]

A Proposal to Seek Divine Settlement

We have learnt from long experience that, despite failing repeatedly, our opponents have not abandoned their campaign of vilification....They stage foul and painful plays which are derogatory of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and represent him as a person of evil character.

How, then, should this matter be settled? We can of course issue effective refutation, but how can we stop them from offending again? How can we tie up their foul tongues and how can we put a lock upon their reviling mouths?...These heartless Christian ministers have wounded our hearts by hurling millions of vile abuses on our Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him)....

How then can these contentions, which increase daily, be settled? We have despaired of anything good coming out of debates and discussions. These have only led to an increase in rancour and hatred. In this state of affairs, there is, in my estimation, only one easy way to reach a settlement, if the Christian ministers were to agree to it: It is to seek a decision of these disputes from God Almighty.

I wish to state that I am most eager to seek a Divine settlement of this affair, and I wish most sincerely that these daily contentions may be set at rest in this manner. If God does not render a decision in my favour, I will hand over all my property, moveable and immovable, the value of which is not less than ten thousand rupees, to the

Christians. I am prepared to deposit up to three thousand rupees in advance for this purpose. This would be a sufficient penalty for me. I also promise that I shall, in such case, make an announcement bearing my signature that the Christians have been victorious and I have been defeated. This announcement will not be subject to any explicit or implicit condition.

The method of settlement will be as follows: One of the respected Christian ministers, whose names are mentioned below, should declare his willingness to come forward against me at a place to be agreed between us. Both of us should present ourselves on the appointed day at the appointed place along with a number of our followers. We should seek a decision from God Almighty through the prayer that God Almighty may, within one year, afflict one of us, who is a liar and deserving of His wrath, with such torment as, out of His sense of Honour, He has always imposed upon false and disbelieving people, including Pharaoh, Nimrod, the people of Noah and the Jews. The Christian ministers should note that this supplication does not call down a curse upon anyone. Its only purpose is the chastisement of a false person who is not willing to abandon his falsehood. The death of one man is a small price to pay for the revival of the whole world.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 38-41]

Conclusive Arguments for Reverend Whitebrecht

...Miān Fateḥ Masīḥ, a Christian preacher, had claimed that he too was a recipient of revelation, and could set forth revealed prophecies in advance of their occurrence. Monday, the 21st of May 1888, was the day appointed to test his claim at my residence. Many respectable Muslims and Hindus of standing came to my residence to

witness the presentation of prophecies by Miān Fateḥ Masīḥ, who arrived accompanied by a number of Christians after 10:00 am. But, instead of setting forth his prophecies against me...he only said that he did not claim to be a recipient of revelation and that whatever he had said was merely to counter my claim....

The purpose of this announcement is that if a respectable European Christian should claim to be a recipient of revelation, he will be at liberty to set forth his revealed prophecies in a meeting to be held at Batāla, where I intend to remain till the end of Ramaḍān, provided he has no intention of running away after acknowledging his falsehood, as Fateḥ Masīḥ did. Reverend Mr. Whitebrecht, who is a respectable European missionary in these parts, is especially invited. If the reverend gentleman would acknowledge in a public meeting that Christians are no longer capable of receiving revelation, I shall not require him to set forth his prophecies against me. In such case, I shall, in a meeting to be called as desired by him, present such revealed prophecies in advance as will not admit of any doubt whatsoever. If I am not able to present any such definite prophecy as may be considered by the average Hindu, Muslim and Christian to be beyond human power, I shall immediately present two hundred rupees in cash to the reverend gentleman as compensation for his trouble. If he so desires, I can deposit this amount with a respectable Hindu. If the revered gentleman should acknowledge that the prophecy presented by me is truly beyond human power, then it would be obligatory on him to stand firm to test the truth or falsehood of the prophecy. He should arrange for the publication of the prophecy in *Nūr Afshān*, which is a Christian religious newspaper, along with his affirmation

that he has acknowledged the prophecy to be beyond human power, in all respects; because, if it is proven to be true, it must have proceeded from the spring of Divine acceptance and love, and not from any doubtful source like guess work or speculation. Moreover, if this prophecy is truly fulfilled, he would immediately accept Islām, since a prophecy that proceeds from the spring of Divine love is enough proof of the truth of the religion by following which a person is blessed with Divine love, and obviously, a person blessed with the love of God has certainly achieved salvation. If the prophecy does not prove to be true, the deposited amount of two hundred rupees will be handed over to the reverend gentleman.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 147-149]

Miān Fateḥ Masīḥ has announced in the 7th June, 1888, issue of *Nūr Afshān* that he is willing to hold a meeting for the purpose of testing the truth of my revelations. He proposes that a paper containing four questions, enclosed in a sealed envelope, should be handed over to someone present in the meeting, and then I should disclose the text of these questions to him. With reference to this announcement, it is necessary to point out, as I have mentioned in my announcement of 24th May 1888, that Miān Fateḥ Masīḥ, whose nature consists of falsehood upon falsehood, is not worthy of being addressed by me. To address him and to hold a meeting with him is unworthy of a righteous person. But if Reverend Whitebrecht should make this request, which is published on page 7 of *Nūr Afshān* of 7th June 1888, I would readily accept it. We have the support of the Almighty and the All-Knowing God of Whom the Christians are unaware. He knows all my secrets and helps His sincere servants, but does not approve of His name being made a subject of

sport and jest. Therefore, let Reverend Whitebrecht hold a public meeting in Batāla and state on oath that if I disclose to him, within ten weeks, the contents of a sealed envelope which will be presented by him he will immediately discard the Christian faith and become a Muslim. If he fails to do so, the amount of one thousand rupees, which he shall deposit in advance with a third party to be agreed upon, will be paid over to the Anjuman Ḥimāyat-e-Islām, Lahore, as penalty. After this public announcement and its publication in *Nūr Afshān*, if I disclose the contents of the sealed envelope within ten weeks, the reverend gentleman will be under obligation to carry out his promise. Failing to do so, he will lose his deposit of one thousand rupees. On the other hand, if I fail to disclose the contents of the sealed envelope, I will renounce my claim of being the recipient of revelation and will submit to whatever punishment may be imposed upon me.

**Announced by,
Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān, 9 June 1888.**

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 150-152]

Lack of Righteousness among Christians

Is any Christian cleric blessed with the Holy Spirit? I am tired of calling upon Christian clerics of the whole world to come forward, but not one of them has responded. Some Christian clerics published a challenge in *Nūr Afshān* requiring the disclosure of the contents of a sealed envelope which they would present in a meeting, but when this challenge was accepted on condition that, upon such disclosure, the challenger or challengers would accept Islām, they forgot all about it. The Christian clergymen have long put a seal on the possibility of revelation. Now that the seal has been broken and the grace of the

Holy Spirit is proven to be descending upon the Muslims, the hollowness of the Christians' belief has been fully exposed.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, p. 156]

In this meeting I suggest an easy method of settlement to Deputy 'Abdullāh Ātham Ṣāhib and all the other Christian gentlemen.... I shall pray to the Living and Perfect God for a sign and you gentlemen should pray to Jesus. You believe that he is the almighty; if that is so, you will certainly succeed. I announce in the name of Allah that if I fail to manifest a sign against you, I shall willingly submit to any punishment, and equally so if you succeed in manifesting a sign in opposition to me.

[Jang-e-Muqaddas, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, p. 138]

How can the Torah and the Gospels stand against the Holy Qur'ān? Even if people try to discover and set forth the countless verities, spiritual insights and wisdom comprised in the seven brief verses of *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah*—in a natural sequence and firm order—from the Book of Moses^{as}, or from the few pages of the Gospel of Jesus they can never succeed, even if they spend their whole lives trying.... If they believe that the Torah or the Gospel is perfect in setting forth Divine verities, insights and spiritualities of the Word of God, I am prepared to award them five hundred rupees in cash. If they consider this amount too little, I am prepared to increase it as much as they may suggest, provided it is within my means. What they have to do is set forth from their voluminous books—which number about seventy—truths and insights of the law and well-arranged pearls and jewels of the unique characteristics of the Divine Word, like those that I shall set forth from *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* and shall pre-

sent to them in print. It will be the duty of Christian priests to present, from the Torah, the Gospel and all their other books, truths, insights and characteristic qualities of the Divine Word, which match the ones I will present from *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah*. The attributes referred to must be extraordinary wonders that cannot be found in any human composition. If they do so, and if three umpires, chosen from among followers of other religions, certify that the qualities that have been established in the case of *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* are also contained in the passages presented by the Christian missionaries, the amount of five hundred rupees, which shall be in deposit to their satisfaction, shall be handed over to them.

Now does any Christian minister have the courage to come forward for such a contest?

[Sirāj-ud-Dīn ‘Īsā’ī ke Chār Sawāloṅ kā Jawāb, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 12, pp. 360-361]

Open Challenge to All Christians

There is nothing in the Gospel that establishes the godhood of Jesus.... If his godhood can be established by the words of the Gospel, then the revelations vouchsafed to me connote my godhood to a greater degree than do the revelations of Jesus in his case. If the Christian ministers are not capable of determining this matter by themselves, then let them submit the revelations and words of Jesus set out in the Gospel, which are supposed to establish his godhood, to three umpires who may be mutually agreed upon from among non-Muslims and non-Christians, and if they decide and state on oath that the godhood of Jesus is established more clearly from his reported words, I would hand over one thousand rupees to the Christian ministers as a penalty. The umpires should state on oath, in the name of God Almighty, that they have made the

truthful decision, and also state that that if it be otherwise, may God Almighty afflict them, within one year, with such torment as should involve their ruin and disgrace. But I am convinced that the Christian ministers will not agree to this method of settlement.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, p.106]

It is also my claim that my prophecies and signs are stronger than those of Jesus. If any Christian minister can establish that the prophecies and signs of Jesus are stronger than mine, I shall hand over one thousand rupees to him.

Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, p. 314]

Invitation to Christians for *Mubāhalah*

As the religious rancour of the Christians keeps mounting, it has become necessary that, in order to put an end to this daily conflict, they should enter into a *Mubāhalah* [prayer duel] with me on the question of the truth or falsehood of Islām and Christianity. Should the Christians be averse to the use of the word 'curse', I will not insist on it, and will propose that both sides should pray in the following words:

'Lord of the world, Islām teaches that the doctrine of Trinity is altogether false and a satanic device, and that son of Mary was not God but only a human being and a Prophet, and that Ḥaḍrat Muḥammad Muṣṭafā (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was a true Prophet and Messenger of God, and was the Seal of the Prophets, and that the Holy Qur'ān is the Word of God which is free from all error and misguidance. The Christian teaching, on the other hand, is that Jesus, son of Mary, was the true God who created the heaven and earth and through whose blood the world was re-

deemed, and that God is made of a Trinity: the father, the son and the holy ghost; and that Jesus, a combination of the three, is the perfect God. Almighty God, may You judge between the two parties who are present before You, in the following manner: May the one who professes the wrong doctrine be destroyed in a great torment within one year, because the destruction of a few would provide deliverance for the whole world.'

One of the parties should make this supplication and the other should say *Āmīn*; and then the other party should make the same supplication and the first party should say *Āmīn*; and both should await God's Judgement for one year. I promise that I shall deposit two thousand rupees to pay over to Christians who participate in this *Mubāhalah*. This is a necessary method of settlement as we claim that the Living and Mighty God is with us, and the Christians claim that He is with them.

From the result of the *Mubāhalah* the public will learn which party has God's support. If the Christians do not agree to this method of settlement, they will build for themselves a store of curses in heaven, and people will know that they are false. My invitation is addressed to Dr Clark, Reverend 'Imād-ud-Dīn, Ḥissām-ud-Dīn (Editor of *Kashf-ul-Ḥaqā'iq*), Munshī Ṣafdar 'Alī Bhandārah, Reverend Fateḥ Masīḥ and to every Christian minister who is an enemy of Islām and may wish to join in. This is a good way of settlement so that the world may be rid of these daily conflicts and the false ones may be humiliated. *Peace be on those who follow the guidance.*

**Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
Qādiān.**

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, p. 33]

I state on oath that Allah the Glorious, has clearly conveyed to me through revelation that Jesus (peace be upon him) was a human being like all others, and that he was a true Prophet and Messenger of God and was His chosen one. I have also been told that, through following the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), I have been given whatever Jesus^{as} was given, and that I am the Promised Messiah, and that I have been furnished with a weapon of light which shall dispel all darkness and will break the cross. It is, therefore, necessary that within one year of the *Mubāhala*, a sign should be manifested in my support. If no such sign is manifested, it would be established that I am not from God and that I deserve to die. Accepting all this, I call upon Dr. Martin Clark to announce that if, after the *Mubāhala*, a sign is manifested within one year in support of Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad and no sign is manifested in his support, he would accept Islām, failing which he should transfer half of his property to me for purpose of propagating Islām and should never again stand in opposition to Islām.

Doctor Şāhib should appreciate that I have imposed much harder conditions upon myself than I have proposed for him. For instance, if both of us are able to show a sign, he will be the winner, and if neither of us is able to manifest a sign within the period specified, even then he will be considered the winner. My truth will only be proved if I am able to manifest a sign, within the specified period, which Doctor Şāhib is unable to match. If, after the publication of this announcement, he does not publish an announcement as I have intimated above, he will be deemed to have evaded the challenge. I would still be ready for a logical debate with him, provided he

publicly acknowledges that he and his people are unable to manifest any sign, as heavenly signs are a characteristic of Islām alone and Christianity is bereft of such blessings.

[Hujjat-ul-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 49-50]

Prophecy about Ātham and its Fulfilment

The prophecy which was made at Amritsar on 5th June 1893, at the conclusion of the debate with the Christians, was supposed to be fulfilled by 5th September, 1894, at the latest. And it has, according to the design and command of God Almighty, been fulfilled so clearly before the expiry of that date, that a just-minded and sane person cannot help but acknowledge it....

If the Christians rely upon their cunning devices to dispute this, or anyone else has any doubts about it, I am prepared to enter into a *Mubāhalah* to determine whether the Muslims have been victorious, as is the case, or if the victory goes to the Christians, as they unjustly imagine. If they do not desist from falsehood and trickery, the *Mubāhalah* will take place in the following manner. On a day to be agreed upon, both parties will present themselves at the appointed place, and Mr. 'Abdullāh Ātham shall make the following affirmation three times:

During the period of the prophecy I have not for a single moment stood in awe of Islām, and have throughout considered Islām and the Prophet of Islām (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to be in the wrong and still so consider. The idea of their being true has never crossed my mind. I have always believed and still believe that Jesus is the son of God and is God Himself, as is the belief of Protestant Christians. If my affirmation is not true and I have concealed the truth, then, O Mighty Lord, may You afflict

me with death within one year."

We shall say *Āmīn* to this supplication. If the supplication is not fulfilled within one year, and Mr. 'Abdullāh Ātham is not afflicted within that period in the manner in which the false ones are afflicted, I shall pay him one thousand rupees as penalty.

[*Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt*, vol. 2, pp. 23-30]

I do not wish to trouble Mr. 'Abdullāh Ātham to come to my place of residence in Amritsar. On his invitation, I shall go to his residence with one thousand rupees.... He will have to take no trouble whatever. I will also not require him to make his affirmation standing up or sitting down. He may keep lying on his bed and simply make his required announcement three times.

[*Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt*, vol. 2, p. 52]

If some bigoted and senseless people should still entertain doubts, I hereby make this second announcement, offering an award of two thousand rupees. If Mr. Ātham affirms on oath three times, in a public meeting, that his heart has not in the least been affected by the greatness of Islām during the period of the prophecy, and he has throughout remained an enemy of Islām, having a firm faith in the sonship and divinity of Jesus and in the doctrine of atonement, I shall immediately pay him two thousand rupees, according to the conditions laid down in my announcement of 9th September, 1894....

If Mr. Ātham should still refuse to take the proposed oath, everyone should then note that he has concealed the truth out of his fear of the Christians and that Islām is supreme and victorious....

Our opponents should keep in mind that Mr. Ātham will never make the affirmation on oath. Why would he not

do it? Because he is a liar. To those who say that he might be afraid that dying within a year is a possibility, we reply: Who will cause him to die? His god Jesus or someone else? This is a contest between two gods; the True God Who is our God, and the false god set up by the Christians. If Mr. Ātham believes in the divinity and power of Jesus, and has personal experience of it, he should pray to Jesus to keep him alive during this period. Man is mortal; Mr. Ātham is now sixty-four and I am about sixty. We are equally subject to the law of nature. If I were called upon to make an affirmation on oath in order to test the truth, I would affirm not just that I will survive for one year but even ten years; this is because of my certainty that God Almighty will help me in a contest about religion....This is a contest between two gods. Only He, who is the True God, will now be victorious. I affirm that the Might of our God will surely be manifested in this manner, and I shall not die within the appointed period of one year; but if Mr. Ātham makes a false affirmation on oath, he will certainly die within that period. The question is: what will befall Mr. Ātham's god, if that god is not able to save him. Will he resign from his function as the redeemer? There is no way of escape for Mr. Ātham. He should either stop calling Jesus, 'God Almighty' or should make the required affirmation on oath. What is more, if he acknowledges publicly that his Messiah, the son of God, does not have the power to keep him alive for a year but does have the power to keep him alive for four months or even three days, I shall, after his confession to this effect, agree to a period of four months or even three days.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 57-63]

From the servant of the One God, Aḥmad, may Allah

grant him forgiveness and success, to Mr. ‘Abdullāh Ātham. I have read your letter, which is on page 10 of the 21 September 1894 issue of *Nūr Afshān*. I regret to say that you have done your best to conceal the truth in this letter. Through revelation, I have obtained from God Almighty certain and definite knowledge, which is as clear as the rising sun, that you were deeply affected by the greatness and truth of Islām during the period appointed in the prophecy, and that is why you were terrified of its fulfilment. I affirm on oath, in the name of Allah the Glorious, that what I am saying is true; this is what I have been told by God Almighty, Who is aware of the perceptions of a human heart and has the knowledge of a man’s most secret thoughts. If this statement of mine is not true, may God cause me to die in your life. This is why I wanted you to make an affirmation on oath, in a public meeting, in the words and manner that I have suggested, so that the matter may be decided between us, and the world may not remain in the dark anymore. If you so desire, I can make an affirmation on oath for a period extending, in my case, to one, two, or even three years, because I know that a truthful person is not destroyed, but only the person whom falsehood has already ruined will be destroyed. If I am called upon to make an affirmation on oath concerning the truth of my revelation, or the truth of Islām, I will not require a penny from you, but if you make the required affirmation on oath, you will be handed bags containing three thousand rupees in advance.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 86-87]

It is incumbent upon Mr. Ātham...to satisfy us by the simple and easy means of a statement on oath that he did not stand in awe of my prophecy, rather he was only

afraid because he considered me to be a blood thirsty person and imagined that he would become a victim of my sword. He is required to do no more than to make the statement mentioned in my announcements of 9th and 20th September 1894, at which point he will be paid four thousand rupees. It is idle for him to pretend that Christians are forbidden to take an oath. Were Peter and Paul and many righteous Christians of earlier ages unaware of this prohibition, or were they not Christians?...

If Mr. Ātham makes the required statement on oath, he will inevitably die within one year, and there are no conditions whatsoever. Even if he fails to make the required statement on oath, God Almighty will not leave unpunished an offender who is trying to deceive the world by concealing the truth.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 103-106]

About redemption, Allah Almighty has said in the Holy Qur'ān:

وَقَالُوا لَنْ يَدْخُلَ الْجَنَّةَ إِلَّا مَن كَانَ هُودًا أَوْ نَصْرَىٰ تِلْكَ أَمَانِيُّهُمْ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ۝ بَلَىٰ مَنْ أَسْلَمَ وَجْهَهُ لِلَّهِ وَهُوَ مُحْسِنٌ فَلَهُ أَجْرُهُ عِندَ رَبِّهِ ۖ وَلَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝²⁵³

‘ And they said: No one but Jews and Christians will enter heaven, i.e., achieve salvation. These are only their vain desires. Tell them: Set forth your proof if you are truthful; i.e., show us what kind of salvation you have achieved. Indeed, the truly redeemed is he who hands himself over to Allah, that is, who has devoted his life in the way of Almighty God and spent it in His way and, after devotion, continuously performs good deeds and all

²⁵³ Al-Baqarah, 2:112-113 [Publisher]

kinds of good actions. Such a person will receive his reward from his Lord. These people will have no fear nor shall they grieve, i.e., they will be fully redeemed.’

In these verses, Allah the Glorious has said that the claim of the Jews and Christians that they are redeemed is only a vain desire, and they do not possess the true spirit of life. Real salvation is something which can be experienced in this very life. Such a person is able to devote himself wholly to God Almighty, so that his life and his death and all his actions are entirely for the sake of God. He is wholly lost to his own ego, and God’s will becomes his will. This is not just the desire of his heart; rather, all his faculties, reasoning, and thinking are dedicated to God. It is only then that he truly deserves to be called a *Muḥsin*, i.e., one who carries service and obedience as far as is possible for him. Such a person is truly redeemed, as is said at another place:

قُلْ إِنِّ صَلَاتِي وَنُسُكِي وَمَحْيَايَ وَمَمَاتِي لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ
 254 لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ وَبِذَلِكَ أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُسْلِمِينَ

(Part 8, Sūrah An‘ām, Rukū‘ 20)

‘Proclaim: My prayer and my sacrifices, my life and my death are all for Allah, the Lord of the worlds, Who has no associate. I have been commanded to work to attain that status and I am the foremost of those who submit wholly to Allah.’

Allah the Glorious mentions further signs of such redemption in His Noble Book. Although what has already been mentioned clearly distinguishes those who are truly redeemed, God has, nevertheless, set out the signs of the

²⁵⁴ Al-An‘ām, 6:163-164 [Publisher]

redeemed. This is because the worldly minded are unable to perceive this inner redemption and closeness to God and the distinction between the redeemed and the unredeemed remains in doubt. The followers of every religion claim to be redeemed. God Almighty has, therefore, appointed signs for the true believers who attain salvation in this very life, whereby they can be distinguished, and no doubt remains. Some of these signs are:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا بِاللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ ۝ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ ۝ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرَىٰ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ لَا
تَبْدِيلَ لِكَلِمَاتِ اللَّهِ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْفَوْزُ الْعَظِيمُ²⁵⁵

(Part 11, Rukū‘ 12, Sūrah Yūnus)

This means that:

‘Hearken, the friends of Allah shall certainly have no fear, nor shall they grieve. They are the ones who truly believe, i.e., they became subservient to Allah and His Messenger and then became pious. For them are glad tidings from God Almighty in this world and in the hereafter, i.e., God will continue to give them glad tidings through dreams, visions, and Divine discourse. There is no changing the words of God. This is the great triumph which is destined for them, i.e., through such success they will be distinguished from the disbelievers, who are not truly redeemed and who will not be able to stand against them.’ At another place it is said:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ قَالُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ ثُمَّ اسْتَقَامُوا تَتَنَزَّلُ عَلَيْهِمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ أَلَّا
يَخَافُوا وَلَا يَحْزَنُوا أَوْ أَبَشُرُوا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِي كُنتُمْ تُوعَدُونَ ۝ تَحَنُّوا وَلِيَّوْكُمْ
فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ ۚ وَكُنتُمْ فِيهَا مَا تَشْتَهَىٰ أَنْفُسُكُمْ وَكُنتُمْ فِيهَا مَا

²⁵⁵ Yūnus, 10:63-65 [Publisher]

تَدْعُونَ ۝ نُرْزِلُ مِنْ غَفُورٍ رَحِيمٍ ۝²⁵⁶

(Part 24, Rukū‘ 18)

That is: ‘The sign of those who say ‘Our Lord is Allah’ and then remain steadfast, is that angels descend upon them, and reassure them: ‘Fear not nor grieve, and rejoice in the Garden that you were promised. We are your friends and caretakers in this life and in the hereafter. Therein you will have all that you desire, and therein you will have all that you ask for. This is an entertainment from the Most Forgiving, the Ever-Merciful.’

Please note that the signs of the redeemed which are set out in these verses include converse with God, acceptance by Him, His guardianship and providence, the enjoyment of heavenly life in this world and God’s help and His support.

The following verse which I recited yesterday, gives the indication that a truly redeemed one always brings forth good fruit and is bestowed heavenly blessings.

تُؤْتِي الْأَمْكَارَ كُلَّ حِينٍ²⁵⁷

At another place it is said:

وَإِذَا سَأَلَكَ عِبَادِي عَنِّي فَإِنِّي قَرِيبٌ أُجِيبُ دَعْوَةَ الدَّاعِ إِذَا
دَعَا فَلَيْسَتْ حِجَابًا لِي وَلِيُؤْمِنُوا لِي لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْشُدُونَ²⁵⁸

(Part 2, Rukū‘ 7)

‘O Prophet, when My servants inquire from thee concerning Me, tell them I am near.’ This means that when the Muslims enquire what are the bounties in respect of

²⁵⁶ Hā Mīm Al-Sajdah, 41:31-33 [Publisher]

²⁵⁷ It brings forth its fruit at all times, Ibrāhīm, 14:26 [Publisher]

²⁵⁸ Al-Baqarah, 2:187 [Publisher]

which we are distinguished from others, they should be told that the distinction is that they are close to God and the others are far from Him. ‘I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls on Me. So they should respond to Me and have firm faith in Me, that they may be rightly guided.’ That is, God responds to those of them who pray to Him and talks to them and accepts their supplications. ‘They should, therefore, carry out His commands and have firm faith in Him so that they may attain righteousness.’

The signs of the redeemed are set at various other places, but it would take too long to rehearse them all. One of them is:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَتَّقُوا اللَّهَ يَجْعَلْ لَكُمْ فُرْقَانًا²⁵⁹

(Part 9, Rukū‘ 18, Sūrah Anfāl)

‘O Ye who believe, if you fear God, He will bestow a mark of distinction between you and the others.’

Now I respectfully ask Mr. ‘Abdullāh Ātham: If the Christian faith prescribes any path to salvation which you consider to be right and true, and by following which you believe salvation can be achieved, then the signs of such salvation and the signs of those who are delivered from the darkness of this world through such salvation, must surely be recorded in the Gospels. Please tell me briefly whether those signs can be found in your own person, or in those whom you consider holy among you, or your leaders, or those among you whom you consider to be of a higher order? If these signs are found in them, kindly furnish proof thereof; and if such signs are not found in

²⁵⁹ Al-Anfāl, 8:30 [Publisher]

them, then please consider the following: If there is no discoverable sign of the truth and correctness of something, is it possible to have confidence and certainty about it? For instance, if a medicine fails to produce the effects which it is supposed to produce, can it be considered genuine and effective? When we look at the path to salvation which you gentlemen have presented and compare it with that of the Holy Qur'ān, your path clearly seems to be artificial and unnatural; and it has also been established that no true way of salvation has been taught in your religion. The path which Allah the Glorious has set out in the Holy Qur'ān is that when a person dedicates himself and his whole life to the cause of God Almighty, he makes a true sacrifice of his self and becomes worthy of being bestowed new life in return for the death which he has accepted.

If you consider that this way of salvation which is set out in the Holy Qur'ān is not true, then you should produce, in the words of Jesus, a well reasoned way of salvation as an alternative; and you should also set out its signs in the blessed words of Jesus so that those present in this meeting may be able to decide upon the issue immediately.... No verity can be proved without its signs. One of the criteria of distinguishing verities is to test them by their signs. We on our side have set out the signs of the way of salvation taught by Islām, supported by my claim that those signs are found in me. Now you are under obligation to do the same on your side. If you fail to prove the truth and perfection of the way of salvation attributed to Jesus, your claim cannot be accepted. On the other hand, whatever the Holy Qur'ān has set out, is true and correct; it is not a mere claim, but is supported by proof, which I have set forth. You should not stop at making a mere

claim of salvation without any proof. One of you gentlemen should stand up and announce that he has attained salvation according to the teaching of Jesus, and that the signs of salvation and perfect righteousness appointed by Jesus are to be found in him. We would be ready to examine such a claim, for our only purpose is to seek the truth. No one is prepared to accept mere words. I have already submitted to you that I have experience of the salvation that the Holy Qur'ān promises, and I am prepared to affirm once more on oath, in the name of Allah Almighty, that I am ready to prove my claim. What I require is to know whether true salvation can be achieved together with its signs in your religion or not. If it can be achieved, then demonstrate it and compare it with the proof that I am ready to offer. If such salvation, together with its signs, is not to be found in your religion, you have only to say so and I will furnish proof of my claim unilaterally.

[Jang-e-Muqaddas, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 143-149]

Mr. Ātham will never make the required affirmation on oath. Even if the Christian clerics should continue to urge him to the extreme limit, he will never make the affirmation against me because he knows in his heart that my prophecy concerning him has been fulfilled. It is enough proof of my truth that Mr. Ātham will never make the required affirmation on oath in opposition to me, however much the Christians might urge him to do so. If he does make the affirmation, the second aspect of the prophecy will doubtlessly be fulfilled. The word of God can never be averted.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, p. 204]

An Easy *Mubāhalah* for the Christians

On 2nd May 1906, I received the announcement of Aḥmad Masīḥ, the blind Christian of Delhi, in which he has challenged me to a *Mubāhalah* for the purpose of arriving at a final Judgement between Islām and Christianity. I accepted his challenge in my announcement of 5th May, on condition that the Bishops of Lahore, Calcutta, Madras and Bombay should also join in the *Mubāhalah*. It will not be necessary for them to take the trouble of coming together at one place. The *Mubāhalah* can be held in writing....It has occurred to me today that further facility may be provided to the Christian gentlemen so that they should have no excuse left. I, therefore, announce that I am ready to enter into *Mubāhalah* with Aḥmad Masīḥ himself, and all that I require from the four Bishops is that they need not present themselves for the *Mubāhalah*, but should announce over their signatures, in the newspapers *Pioneer* or *The Civil and Military Gazette*, that the defeat of Aḥmad Masīḥ will be considered the defeat of the four Bishops also. I suggest this because Aḥmad Masīḥ is an unknown person, and unless the reverend Bishops appoint him their representative, the result of the *Mubāhalah* cannot produce much effect. After this clarification, I trust that the reverend Bishops would, after full deliberation, agree to this form of the *Mubāhalah*.

Further, if my suggestion does not find favour with all four Bishops, it would be enough if the Bishop of Lahore alone were to make the suggested announcement. *Peace be on him who follows the guidance.*

Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, The Promised Messiah
Qādiān, 11 May 1906.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp.556-557]

Invitation to Her Majesty the Queen of England

It is enough proof of my truth that the signs shown at my hands are beyond human power. If Her Majesty, the Empress of India, Queen of Britain, should be interested, my God has the power to manifest a sign for her which would be indicative of joy and good fortune; provided that after witnessing the sign she would accept my message, and that the effect would be given throughout the country to the mission that I hold on behalf of Jesus. But the sign to be manifested would be according to the design of God and not according to any human design. It will, however, be extraordinary and will be reflective of the majesty of God.

[Toḥfah-e-Qaiṣariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, p. 276]

If Her Majesty the Queen should desire to witness a sign as proof of my claim, I am certain that such a sign will be shown within one year and I will pray that she spend this period in health and security. If no sign is manifested and I prove to be false, then I am willing to be hanged in Her Majesty's capital. All this entreaty is out of my desire that our benign Queen should turn to the God of heaven, of Whom the Christian faith is unaware in this age.

[Toḥfah-e-Qaiṣariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, p. 276, footnote]

A Test for Disclosing the Unseen

It is a good opportunity for any seeker after truth, be he a Hindu, Jew, Christian, Āryā, Brahmū, or any other, to come forward and test the truth of my claim. If he can stand up to me in the matter of the disclosing of the unseen and the acceptance of prayers, I call God to witness that I shall hand over to him all my immovable property, which is valued at around ten thousand rupees. I am ready to furnish any guarantee to this effect to the satisfaction of such a seeker. God is my witness that I

shall not default, and will be ready even to suffer death in such a case. Allah Almighty knows that I am sincere in this offer. If anyone entertains any doubt in this respect, he should put forward a better plan, which I shall accept without objection. If I am false it would be better that I were destroyed by means of some severe punishment. If I am true, then I desire to save those who have destroyed themselves.

I call on all Christian clerics, who are respected and distinguished among their own people, in the name of God, to listen to me. Gentlemen, if you have in your hearts even a particle of love for that righteous one whose name is Jesus the Messiah, I call on you to stand up against me. I call you in the name of God, Who caused Jesus to be born of the righteous Mary, Who sent down the Gospel, Who caused Jesus to die a natural death and revived him spiritually and exalted him to heaven and put him in the living company of Abraham^{as}, Moses^{as}, Jonah^{as} and other Prophets who had been revived spiritually before him, that you should stand up against me. If the truth is on your side and Jesus is truly God, you will be victorious. If he is not God and is a humble and helpless person, and Islām is true, God Almighty will hear me and will manifest at my hands that which is beyond your power.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 276-277]

There was a time when the Christian ministers alleged, out of their bigotry, that there were no prophecies in the Holy Qur'ān. Muslim divines tried to answer them, but the truth is that, in the matter of prophecies and extraordinary signs, an effective reply can be given only by one who can himself make a prophecy. This matter cannot be settled by verbal debate. When the false denials of the Christian ministers transgressed the limits,

God sent me to furnish proof of the righteousness of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) and the truth of Islām. Where are the Christian ministers now? Let them stand up to me. I have not come out of time. I have come at a time when the Christians have trampled Islām under their feet. O Ye blind Muslims, who has taught you to oppose the truth? Islām has been ruined; all its limbs have been wounded by external attacks and internal innovations, and twenty three years of the fourteenth century have passed; millions have renounced Islām and have become the enemies of God and His Messenger, but you keep insisting that no one has come from God and only dajjāl has appeared. Show me any Christian cleric who now alleges that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) made no prophecy. That time has passed. Now the time has come when God desires to make it manifest that His Messenger, **Muḥammad of Arabia** (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) who has been reviled, whose name has been dishonoured and who has been declared false by unfortunate Christian ministers in hundreds of thousands of books published in this age, **is true and the Chief of the righteous**. He has been extensively denied but in the end he has been bestowed the crown of honour. I am one of his servants to whom God speaks and in whose support the gates of the unseen and of heavenly signs have been opened wide. O Ye ignorant ones, you may denounce him as a blasphemer, but what value can your denunciations have in the eyes of one who is occupied with the service of the faith under God's command, and sees Divine bounties descending upon Him like rain? The same God, Who descended on the heart of the son of Mary, has also descended on my heart, but in greater

glory. He was a human being and so am I. The light of the sun falls on a wall but the wall cannot claim to be the Sun. The True Sun can say: Depart from me; and then see whether you have any honour.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 285-287]

God has bestowed upon me strength from Himself so that no Christian cleric can withstand me in debate. God has so impressed the hearts of Christian divines with awe that none of them has any strength left to stand up against me. God has sent me the support of the Holy Spirit and has appointed His angels to keep me company, and no Christian cleric can challenge me. These are the people who used to say that the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) performed no miracles and made no prophecy; and now, despite being challenged, they fail to come forward. This is because God has put it in their hearts that they will experience nothing but defeat when they stand up against me.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 149-150]

I proclaim in the name of God Who has sent me, that if any hard-hearted Christian, Hindu or Āryā should deny the bright and clear signs that I have manifested in the past, and should make a simple straightforward announcement in a paper, that on witnessing a sign, whatever it may be, so long as it is beyond human power, he would accept Islām, I am sure that within one year of making such an announcement he will witness a sign. This is because I draw light from that illumined life which was bestowed upon the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) whom I follow. No one can stand up to it. If there is a seeker after truth from among Christians or Hindus or Āryās, let him come for-

ward, and if he believes in the truth of his religion, let him compete with me in the manifestation of heavenly signs. But I tell you beforehand that no one will come forward. They will try to evade my challenge by presenting dishonest and complicated conditions. This is because their religions are dead and they have no one alive from whom they can receive spiritual grace and from whom they can obtain a life shining with signs.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in vol. 15, pp. 140-141]

Divine Permission for *Mubāhalah* against Maulavīs

In the early days I had thought that I was not at liberty to challenge Muslims to a *Mubāhalah*, because *Mubāhalah* involves calling down a curse on each other, and it is not permissible to call down a curse on a Muslim; but my opponents from among the Muslims persist in denouncing me as a disbeliever, and, under the Islamic dispensation, he who denounces a true Muslim as a disbeliever himself becomes the subject of such denunciation. I have, therefore, been commanded to challenge to a *Mubāhalah* those who denounce me as disbeliever and possess sons and daughters and are the originators of the denunciations directed at me.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 332]

In the beginning I avoided the *Mubāhalah*, because I believed that a curse should not be called down on a Muslim. But now I have been told that he who denounces a Muslim as a disbeliever, and does not desist, even though his opponent faces the Ka'bah when he prays, professes belief in the Unity of God, the Prophethood of Muḥammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), and other Islamic doctrines, such a person is himself excluded from Islām. I have, therefore, been

commissioned to enter into a *Mubāhalah* with those who claim to be Muftīs and Maulavīs and Muḥaddathīn who have sons and wives and have led the campaign denouncing me as a disbeliever. I have been directed that I should set forth before them, in a public meeting, a detailed explanation of my claim and should refute all the objections and doubts which disturb their minds. If they still do not desist from denouncing me as a disbeliever, I shall call them to a *Mubāhalah*.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 256-257]

I wish to inform all the Maulavīs and Muftīs who denounce me as a disbeliever because of minor differences or through their own ignorance, that God Almighty has commissioned me and I invite them to a *Mubāhalah* in the following terms. I will first set before you, in a meeting called for the purpose of *Mubāhalah*, the reasons in support of my doctrines derived from the Holy Qur'ān and Aḥādīth. If you still persist in denouncing me as a disbeliever, I shall challenge you to a *Mubāhalah* in the same meeting. My first addressee is Miān Nadhīr Ḥussain of Delhi; should he decline my invitation, my next addressee would be Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batāla, and should he also decline, all those Maulavīs would be my addressees who denounce me as a disbeliever and occupy a leading position among the Muslims. I grant all these gentlemen a period of four months from today, 10th December 1892, within which to enter into a *Mubāhalah* with me under the conditions set out above. If they fail to do so and persist in denouncing me, they will be held responsible before God. I had desired in this book to refute all the false charges which they have levelled against me as the basis for denouncing me as a

disbeliever, but, on account of the illness of the scribe and some other reasons, that part has not yet been printed. All the same, I shall read out the contents of the paper in the meeting called for the purpose of *Mubāhalah*, whether or not it has been printed by that time. It is a necessary condition that I should refute whatever has been written against me by those who have denounced me as a disbeliever, and that I should put forward convincing arguments which will leave no room for them to denounce me. If they still continue to do so, the *Mubāhalah* supplication shall be made in the same meeting. The revelation that has been vouchsafed to me in this context is as follows:

نَظَرَ اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ مُعْطَرًا. وَقَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا قَالَ
إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ. قَالُوا كِتَابٌ مُمْتَلِئٌ مِّنَ الْكُفْرِ وَالْكَذِبِ.
قُلْ تَعَالَوْا نَدْعُ أَبْنَاءَنَا وَابْنَاتَكُمْ وَنِسَاءَنَا وَنِسَاءَكُمْ وَأَنفُسَنَا
وَأَنفُسَكُمْ ثُمَّ نَبْتَهِلْ فَنَجْعَلْ لَّغَنَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَى الْكَاذِبِينَ.

‘God Almighty has looked at you with a fragrant look. Some people have said in their hearts: Lord will you establish someone in the earth who will create disturbance therein? And God replied to them: I know that which you know not. They said: His book is replete with disbelief and falsehood. Say to them: Come, let us call our sons and your sons, and our women and your women and our own selves and your own selves and call down the curse of Allah on the liars.’

This is the permission that I have been granted for *Mubāhalah*.

[Ā’ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 5, pp. 261-266]

O Ye Maulavīs and custodians of shrines who oppose

me, the contentions between us have exceeded all limits. My Community is much smaller in number than yours, and at the moment does not exceed four or five thousand. Nevertheless, be sure that this tree has been planted by the hand of God Who will not let it be destroyed. He will not be pleased till He carries it to perfection. He will water it and enclose it within a compound and will foster it in a wonderful manner. Have you spared any effort in trying to destroy it? Had it been a human project, it would have been destroyed long ago.

It is He Who commanded me to invite you to a *Mubāhalah* so that the enemy of truth may be ruined and the lover of darkness may fall into the abyss of chastisement. Hitherto I had not wanted to call for *Mubāhalah*, nor did I wish to pray for anyone's ruin. Mr. 'Abd-ul-Ḥaq of Ghaznī, presently of Amritsar, desired to hold a *Mubāhalah* with me, but I put him off for a long time. At last, on his insistence, a *Mubāhalah* was held, but I made no supplication for his ruin. But now things have come to such a pass that I have been called dajjāl, I have been named Satan and I have been accounted a liar and an impostor. My opponents have cursed me in their public announcements and in their meetings I have been mentioned with contempt. Now you seem to be intent upon denouncing me as if you have not the slightest doubt in my being a disbeliever. Everyone of you considers reviling me as an act of great merit. You have declared it the way of Islām to call curses on my head.

In the time of all this bitterness and distress, God was with me; He comforted and consoled me throughout. Can an insect stand up against a whole world? Will a particle set itself against the universe? Can the soul of a liar possess such steadfastness? Can a low impostor possess such

power? Be sure, therefore, it is not me you are fighting, but you are fighting God. Can you not distinguish between fragrance and foul smell? Can you not observe the majesty of truth? It would have been much better for you if you had shed tears before God Almighty and had sought guidance from Him concerning me with a trembling heart, and had then followed a certainty and not pursued doubts and delusions.

Now get up and be ready for *Mubāhalah*. You know that my claim is based on the authority of the Holy Qur'ān and Aḥādīth and on Divine revelations vouchsafed to me. You rejected the authority of the Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth and disregarded altogether the Word of God, as if it were no more than a broken reed.

This leaves the second basis of my claim, so I call upon you in the name of the Mighty and Jealous God—and no faithful one can reject a call in His name—to come for a *Mubāhalah* for a Judgement on the basis of the revelation vouchsafed to me.

The procedure will be as follows: After the date and place of the *Mubāhalah* have been agreed upon, I will present myself with a paper on which all the revelations, which I have set out, will be written, and I shall supplicate:

Lord, if these revelations that I hold in my hand are my inventions and You know that I have made them myself, or if they are the result of the incitement of Satan and are not Your Words, may You then cause me to die before the end of one year from this date, or afflict me with such torment as may be worse than death, and do not grant me deliverance until I die, so that my disgrace may be known and people may be delivered from the mischief of my design, as I do not

desire that Your creatures should be mislead on my account, and it is better that such an impostor should die. But, O All-Knowing and All-Aware God, if it is in Your knowledge that all these revelations which I hold in my hand are from You and are Your Words, then may You afflict these opponents of mine who are present here, within one year of this date, with a severe torment; afflict some with blindness, some with leprosy, some with paralysis, some with lunacy, and some with epilepsy. Make some of them the victims of snakebite, or the bite of a mad dog; destroy the property of some and afflict some with calamity and some with disgrace.

When I finish my supplication, both parties should say *Āmīn*. Everyone of the opposite party who is present for *Mubāhalah* should then supplicate:

O All-Knowing and All-Aware God, we account this person, whose name is Ghulām Aḥmad, a liar, an impostor and a disbeliever. If he is truly a liar and an impostor and a disbeliever and a faithless one, and his alleged revelations are not from You but are his own invention, then may You, as a Benefactor of the Muslims, destroy this impostor within a period of one year so that the people may be saved against his mischief. But if he is not an impostor and is from You and all these revelations are Words of Your Mouth, then may You afflict us, who consider him a disbeliever and a liar, within the period of one year, with painful and disgraceful torment by making some of us blind, some leprous, some paralytic, some lunatics, and some by being bitten by a snake or a mad dog. May You afflict with a calamity the wealth and life of some and the honour of others.

At the end of this supplication, everyone should say *Āmīn*. If anyone considers me a liar and an impostor, but

wishes to avoid the use of the expression ‘disbeliever’, he will be at liberty to employ only the term ‘liar’ and ‘impostor’, concerning which he is certain.

After the *Mubāhalah*, if I die within a year or am afflicted with some torment from which I am not expected to be delivered, the people will be secure from my mischief and I shall become accursed forever. I proclaim here and now, that in such case I should be considered a liar and accursed. I will not mind being called dajjāl or the accursed or Satan, and will deserve always to be mentioned with a curse and will accept the Divine Judgement without reservation. In this case, anyone who follows me or considers me to be good or truthful will be subject to God’s chastisement. Thus my end would be vile as is the end of all disgraceful liars.

But, if God safeguards me for a year against death or physical calamity, and my opponents are afflicted with Divine wrath and each of them becomes the subject of some misfortune, and my prayer against them is manifested in a shining manner, the world will recognize the truth and this daily conflict will come to an end. I repeat that up to now I have never prayed against anyone who professed to be a Muslim, and have endured everything with patience; but on that day I shall seek the Judgement of God and shall hold to His Holiness and Honour, so that by destroying the party that is in the wrong and is committed to falsehood, He may safeguard Islām against the mischief of the wicked.

I also agree that my prayer should be regarded as having been answered only if each one of those who come into the field for *Mubāhalah* is afflicted, one way or another, within one year. If even a single one of them is spared—

out of a total of one or two thousand—I shall consider myself to be false and I shall repent at their hands. If I die within one year, the world will be restored to peace and security by the death of an evil one.

But one of my conditions is that at least ten of those whose names are mentioned below should be present at the time of the *Mubāhalah*. If more of them can be present, so much the better, inasmuch as the affliction of a large number with Divine torment is such a clear sign as no one can doubt.

Bear witness, O earth and O heaven, that the curse of God lies on him who, having received this book, neither comes to *Mubāhalah* nor desists from denouncing me as a disbeliever and defaming me, nor keeps away from the company of those who mock at me. O Ye believers, say *Āmīn* to this in the name of God. I have to record that up till now these wicked Maulavīs have not paid any heed to this straightforward manner of Judgement, so that if I am a liar, as they imagine, I may be chastised by God Almighty Who is the Judge of judges.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 64-67]

Open Invitation to All who Seek a Sign

After issuing several invitations to *Mubāhalah*, I have for my part given up making any further attempts in that connection, but everyone who considers me a liar, hypocrite, or an impostor, and rejects my claim of being the Promised Messiah, and regards the revelation vouchsafed to me by God Almighty as my invention, whether he is a Muslim, Hindu, Āryā or follower of any other religion, he is at liberty to come forward and publish a written statement of *Mubāhalah* against me. He should announce in some newspapers, taking oath in the name of God Al-

mighty, that he is fully convinced that I, who claim to be Promised Messiah, am an impostor and liar and dajjāl, and my supposed revelations, some of which are entered in this book, are not the words of God but are all of my own making. This statement should conclude with the supplication:

O God Almighty, if in Your estimation this person is true and not a liar, impostor, disbeliever and faithless, then may You on account of my rejecting him and slandering him, send down some severe punishment upon me, otherwise may You chastise him, Āmīn.

This method of seeking a sign is open to everyone. If, after the publication of this prayer in at least three well-known newspapers, such a person should still escape heavenly punishment, everyone will be free to conclude that I am not from God. No period will be fixed for the manifestation of such a sign. The only requirement will be that something should occur which can be appreciated by everyone.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 71-72]

Ever since God has named me the Promised Messiah and Mahdī, those who call themselves Muslims and call me as a disbeliever, have been greatly agitated against me. I have proved my claim clearly on the basis of the Holy Qur'ān and Aḥādīth, but they deliberately ignored what I said. Then God manifested many heavenly signs in my support but they derived no benefit from these either. Thereafter many of them came forward for *Mubāhalah* and some of them, who claimed to be recipients of revelation, predicted that I shall be destroyed within a specific period during their very lives, but they were themselves destroyed while I lived. Alas, even then the Muslims did not reflect that if all my claims had been of

my own making, my opponents would not have been defeated in each and every case. They have been condemned as false by the Holy Qur'ān. The Aḥādīth describing the spiritual ascension of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Ḥadīth which predicts that the Promised Messiah would be one of the Muslims, proves that they are liars. The results of the *Mubāḥalahs* proclaim their falsehood. Then by what authority do they so daringly oppose and reject me, who has been sent by God, and has continued to call them to the truth for nearly twenty-six years? Have they not experienced the warning conveyed in the verse:

يُصِيبُكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَوْعِدُكُمْ²⁶⁰

Where is Ghulām Dastgīr who supplicated for my destruction in his book *Faiḍ-e-Raḥmānī*, and prayed for the death of whichever of us was false? Where is Maulavī Charāgh Dīn of Jammu who stood up for *Mubāḥalah* against me and predicted my death on the basis of a revelation he was supposed to have received? Where is Faqīr Mirzā who had a large following and who predicted my death with great enthusiasm. He even announced that God had informed him from His throne that I was an impostor and would die during his own lifetime in the following month of Ramaḍān. But when Ramaḍān came, it was he himself who died of the plague. Where is Sa‘d-ullāh of Ludhiāna who stood up for *Mubāḥalah* against me and predicted my death? He died of the plague in my lifetime. Where is Maulavī Moḥy-ud-Dīn of Lakhoke who called me the Pharaoh and predicted my death in his lifetime and pub-

²⁶⁰ ‘Some of that which he threatens you with will *surely* befall you.’ — Al-Mu‘min, 40:29 [Publisher]

lished several of his supposed revelations concerning me? He too passed away in my lifetime. Where is the accountant Bābū Ilāhī Bakhsh of Lahore, the author of '*Aṣā-e-Mūsā*', who described himself as Moses and called me Pharaoh and predicted my death by the plague in his own lifetime, and published several other prophecies about my ruin? He too died of plague within my lifetime, thus bearing witness that his book '*Aṣā-e-Mūsā*' was false and a bundle of impostures. All these people had hoped that I would become an illustration of the verse:

إِنْ يَلِكْ كَاذِبًا فَعَلَيْهِ كَذِبُهُ²⁶¹

But they themselves illustrated this verse by their ruin. By destroying them God also made me an illustration of the second part of the same verse:

وَإِنْ يَلِكْ صَادِقًا يُصِبْكُمْ بَعْضُ الَّذِي يَعِدُكُمْ²⁶²

Have not all these events fully established the design of God Almighty? Yet it was necessary for my opponents to have rejected me because of the Divine prediction published 26 years ago in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*:

A Warner came to the world and the world did not accept him, but God will accept him and will establish his truth with powerful assaults.

I am certain that God will not stop His signs till my truth is made manifest to the world.

Today, 15th May 1908, it has occurred to me that there is

²⁶¹ 'If he be a liar, on him will be *the sin of* his lie.'—Al-Mu'min, 40:29 [Publisher]

²⁶² 'But if he is truthful, then some of that which he threatens you with will *surely* befall you.'—Al-Mu'min, 40:29 [Publisher]

another method by which a God fearing person may perchance emerge from the dangerous whirlpool of denial. It is as follows: Someone out of my opponents who deems me a disbeliever and a liar should obtain the attention of at least ten reputed clerics, or of at least ten well known leading personalities, and should come out against me in order to carry out a test of our truth or falsehood. We should select two persons who are critically ill and each of them should, by the drawing of lots, be allocated to each of us for prayer. Thereafter, the one whose patient recovers completely or lives longer than the other patient, will be considered true. All this is in the hand of Allah Almighty, and, relying on His promise, I predict that God will either bestow full health on the patient allocated to me or will grant him longer life than the other patient; and this will be the testimony of my truth. If this does not happen, it may be concluded that I am not from God. But it will be necessary that the person who stands up against me, and the ten Maulavīs or leading personalities who support him, must announce in three leading papers that, in the case of my triumph, they will accept me and join my Jamā‘at. I shall also be bound by similar conditions.... One benefit resulting from such a contest would be that God Almighty would bestow new life upon someone dangerously ill, who has lost all hope of life, and would thus manifest a sign of reviving the dead. Secondly, the contention between us will be judged peacefully and easily. *Peace be on him who follows the right path.*

Announced by:

Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiānī, The Promised Messiah. 15 May, 1908.

[Chashma-e-Ma‘rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 23, pp. 2-4]

I have steadfastly endured vilification at the hands of

Maulavī Nadhīr Ḥussain Ṣāhib of Delhi and his disciples. Now, in my capacity as a commissioned one of God, I invite him and his followers to God's Judgement in the confidence that He Himself will decide between us. He is aware of what goes on in the hearts and what transpires in the minds, and does not approve of any hurtful activity or needless bewailing. Truly virtuous is he who fears Him. I am not demeaned by anyone calling me a dog or a disbeliever or dajjāl. Man possesses no honour on his own. Honour is bestowed only by the reflection of God's light. If He is not pleased with me and I am evil in His estimation, then I am worse than a thousand dogs.

[Persian Poem]

If God is not pleased with man;
Then no animal is more to be pitied than him.
If we keep feeding the dog of the mean self;
Then we are worse than dogs of the streets.

O Allah! O Guide of all seekers;
O Ye, Whose love is our life.
Make our end upon complete reconciliation with Your
will;
So that our desires relating to both the worlds may be
fulfilled.

The world and its people are busy making hue and cry;
But Your seekers are in another world.
There is one, whom You have granted the light of the
heart;
And there is another struggling in the mud;
The eye, the ear, and the heart, all receive light from
You;
You are the Fountainhead of guidance and grace.

In short, God, the Mighty and Holy, is my refuge and I

commit the whole of my affair to Him. I do not wish to return abuse for abuse, nor do I wish to say anything on my own. It is only He Who has the final say. It is a pity that my opponents have complicated a simple matter. They do not believe that God Almighty has the authority to do what He wills and to appoint whosoever He may please, as His chosen one. Can man fight Him? Does man have the right to ask Him: Why did You do this or why did You not do that?

[Āsmānī Faiṣlah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, pp. 334-335]

Fie on these people, for they do not honour that which God and His Messenger have said. Seventeen years of the century have passed, but their reformer is still hiding in some cave. Why are they so miserly towards me? Had God so willed, I would not have come. At times it comes to my mind that I should supplicate Him to relieve me of this office and to appoint someone else in my place. But, at that very instant, it occurs to me that there can be no greater sin than to lack the courage to perform the service that God desires of me. The more I wish to retire, the more God Almighty pulls me forward. There is rarely a night during which I am not confronted with the words: "I am with thee and My heavenly hosts are with thee." The pure of heart will see God after death, but I swear by His countenance that I behold Him here and now. The world does not know me but He Who has sent me knows me. Those who seek my ruin are utterly mistaken and totally unfortunate. I am a tree planted by the Hand of the True Master. He who seeks to cut me down only desires to partake of the fate of Korah, Judas Iscariot and Abū Jahl. My eyes shed tears daily for someone to come forward and seek Judgement concerning me, according to the standard of prophethood, and then see on whose side

God is; but coming forward for such a test is not the business of every characterless person. There was one Ghulām Dastgīr, one of the disbelieving hosts of the Punjab, who laid down his life in this attempt. It is now impossible for someone like him to come forward.

O Ye people, be sure that I am supported by the Hand that will be faithful to me till the end. If your men and your women, your young and your old, your small and your great, should all come together and supplicate for my ruin until their noses are rubbed out by their repeated prostration and their hands are numbed, even then God will not hear their supplication and will not desist till He has fulfilled His design. If not even a single person remains with me, God's angels will be with me, and if you conceal the true testimony, stones will well nigh bear testimony in my support. Do not, therefore, wrong your souls. The false and the true have different countenances. God does not leave any matter without judgement. I curse a life of falsehood and imposture, and the failure to serve the Creator for fear of His creatures. It is not possible for me to be lax in performing the service which God Almighty has appointed for me at its appropriate time, though the sun and the earth may join hands to trample me down. What is man but an insect and what is a human being but a lump of flesh? Can you then expect me to disobey the command of the Ever-Living and Self-Subsisting One for the sake of an insect or a lump of flesh? In the end God has always judged between His commissioned ones and their opponents; He will do the same now. There is a season for the coming of God's commissioned ones and a season for their departure. Be sure, therefore, that I have neither come out of season nor shall I depart out of season. Do not fight God. It is not

within your power to destroy me.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 49-50]

Peace is Best

O Ye Muslim divines who denounce me as a liar and a disbeliever or are in doubt concerning me, it has occurred to me that I should approach you once more for a settlement. This does not mean that I shall compel you to accept my beliefs or modify them in any respect contrary to the comprehension that God has bestowed upon me. What I mean is that we should make a firm agreement that neither side, including our respective supporters, will indulge in any kind of offensive language against the other, nor attack the honour of the other in speech or writing or by way of innuendo. If anyone from one side visits anyone on the other, he should be treated with due courtesy....

If my enterprise is not authorised by God, it will be destroyed; but if it is so authorised, no enemy can destroy it. To go on slighting this Community because its numbers are small is inconsistent with good morals. This is the time when our opposing divines should display their good manners, for when the membership of the Aḥmadīyyah Movement grows into millions and people of every standing, including some sovereigns, come into its fold, as God Almighty has promised, all this rancour and hatred will naturally disappear. But the courtesy and politeness that will then be extended to the members of the Movement will not be for the sake of God, and the gentle behaviour of the opposing divines will not be considered as part of good manners. Now is the time to show good manners when the membership of this Movement is no more than a few thousands.... For the present there is no

better plan for the settlement of these differences. Hereafter, whichever side has the support of God will gradually achieve supremacy. Truth first appears in the shape of a small seed and gradually grows into a big tree, which bears fruits and flowers among which birds which seeks the truth can relax.

Announced by:

Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad, From Qādiān

5 March, 1901.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 398-400]

Six Signs of Divine Support

I announce once more, for the sake of those who seek the truth, that if they have not even now realized that I am true, they can satisfy themselves again through any of the following six signs which God Almighty has bestowed upon me.

One: Any arrogant person who desires to compete with me in proficiency in Arabic, is at liberty to produce the match of this Arabic writing both in poetry and in prose; and if some Arabic speaking person testifies that his work is equal to mine, I shall be accounted false.

Two: Failing this, my opponents can compete with me in writing an Arabic commentary on any seven verses of the Holy Qur'ān which are randomly selected, and if I am not acknowledged as being clearly superior to them, I am to be accounted as false.

Three: One of my well-known opponents should stay with me for a year. During this time, if I fail to manifest some sign which is beyond the power of man, I may be accounted false.

Four: Some of my well-known opponents may announce

publicly that if they witness a sign within one year of the date of the announcement, they will repent and acknowledge my truth. If, within that time, no sign is manifested by me which is beyond human power, whether by way of prophecy or otherwise, I shall acknowledge that I am false.

Five: Failing all these, Sheikh Muḥammad Ḥussain of Batāla and other well-known opponents of mine should come forward for *Mubāhalah* with me. Thereafter, if even a single one of them escapes the consequences of my supplication in the *Mubāhalah*, I shall acknowledge myself to be false.

I invite every opponent in the name of God Almighty to make a trial by any one of the methods that I have suggested: They should either write and publish a reply to this writing in fluent Arabic within two months, before 10th March 1897; or they should compete with me in writing an Arabic commentary on any seven verses of the Holy Qur'ān in my presence; or anyone of them can come and stay with me for one year for the purpose of witnessing a sign, or he can await a sign for one year, after making a unilateral announcement; or he can enter into *Mubāhalah* with me.

Six: If none of these methods appeals to them, they should enter into a truce with me and my Community for a period of seven years on the condition that they will not denounce me as a disbeliever and a liar, will not revile me, will meet everyone of us with courtesy and goodwill, will generally behave towards us like good Muslims in fear of God, and will refrain from every kind of mischief and misconduct. And if during this seven year period, I am not able to perform, with the support of God Al-

mighty, outstanding service in the cause of Islām, for instance, if the destruction of false religions, which has been predicted at the hands of the Promised Messiah, is not manifested through me, and God Almighty does not manifest those signs at my hands which should make Islām supreme and whereby people should begin to accept Islām from every direction, and the false god of Christianity should be destroyed, and the world should enter a new epoch, I will acknowledge myself a liar. I call God Almighty to witness that I shall be bound by this declaration. God Almighty knows that I am not a liar. The period of seven years is not long, and it is not within human power to work such a revolution in such a short time. As I offer to make this agreement sincerely, in the name of God Almighty, and call all of you to make this truce, you should fear God and respond to me. If I am not from God, I am bound to be ruined. Otherwise no one can ruin a commissioned one of God.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 304-319]

Prayer for a Divine Decree

The controversy between my opponents and me has now reached the limit. He Who has sent me will now judge between us. If I am true, heaven will surely bear strong witness for me, which will set people atremble. But if I have offended God by inventing lies against Him over a period of twenty-five years, how can I escape His wrath? In such case, even if all of you should become my friends, I will still be a ruined person because God's hand would be against me.

O Ye people, keep in mind that I am not a liar but am oppressed, I am not an impostor but a righteous man.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 189-190]

The treatment that my own people have accorded to me is well known and the hostility of other people towards me is natural. All of them have done their utmost to destroy me. They have contrived every project for doing me harm and have carried it to its limit. They have omitted nothing—prayers, declarations of the merit of slaying me, slander and defamation. Then which is the hand that safeguards me? Had I been a liar, God would Himself have furnished the means of my ruin and it would not have been necessary for people to devise methods for my ruin and be frustrated by God. Is it the sign of a liar that the Holy Qur'ān should bear witness for him, heavenly signs should be manifested in his support, reason should uphold him, and those who desire his death should themselves die? I do not believe that after the age of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him), any opponent of a godly or true person has suffered such clear defeat and disgrace as my enemies have on account of their opposition to me. When they attacked my honour they were themselves disgraced, and when they announced that I was a liar and I would die before them, they ended up dying before me.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 45-46]

How can God, Whose powerful hand supports heaven and earth and all that is between them, be frustrated by the designs of men? The day is near when He will announce His Judgement. It is a sign of the righteous that the end is always in their favour. God descends upon their hearts with His manifestations. How can that structure be demolished in which the true King has His abode? Revile me as much as you like, and devise whatever means of persecution you can think of, and make every plan for my ruin, but remember that God will soon

prove that His hand is supreme. A foolish one thinks that he can win with his devices, but God rebukes him: ‘O accursed one, I shall frustrate all thy designs.’ Had God so willed, He would have bestowed sight upon these opposing Maulavīs and their followers, and they would have recognized the time and the season of the advent of God’s Messiah; but the prophecies of the Holy Qur’ān and of the Ḥadīth were bound to be fulfilled, which had predicted that the Promised Messiah would be persecuted by the Muslim divines who would denounce him as a disbeliever, condemn him to death, slander him and account him as being outside the pale of Islām and a destroyer of the faith.

[Tohfah-e-Golarhviyyah , Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 17, p. 53]

God Almighty has not yet exhausted His support and His signs, and I declare on oath in His name that He will not desist till my truth is manifested throughout the world. O Ye people who hear my voice, fear God and do not transgress. Had all this been a human project, God would have destroyed me, and not a trace would be left. But you have seen how the help of God Almighty has supported me all along, and numberless signs have been manifested in my support. How many of my enemies have perished as a consequence of holding *Mubāhalah* with me. O servants of God, do reflect, does God Almighty accord such treatment to liars?

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 22, p.554]

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**THE ESSENCE OF
ISLĀM
VOLUME IV**

Extracts from the Writings, Speeches,
Announcements and Discourses of the
Promised Messiah
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad
of Qādiān
[May peace be upon him]

Published under the auspices of
Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad
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[May Allāh be his help]

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This is the fourth volume of a set comprising of an English translation of the extracts from the writings, speeches, announcements and discourses of the Promised Messiah, Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān [may peace be upon him], the Holy Founder of the Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Community (1835-1908).

The book presents the extracts from the works of Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} himself relating to the following four topics:

- Family and personal background of the Promised Messiah^{as}
- Status of the Promised Messiah^{as}
- The purpose of the Promised Messiah's^{as} advent
- Propagation and the establishment of a holy community and instructions

The original compilation, in Urdu, Arabic and Persian, from which these extracts have been rendered into English, was collated with great care and diligence by the late Syed Mīr Dāwūd Aḥmad, may Allāh reward him for his labour of love. He published his selection in the form of a book, *Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad Qādiāni, alaihissalāto wassalām, apnī tehrīron kī rū sey*, or 'Ḥaḍrat Mirzā

Ghulām Aḥmad^{as} of Qādiān, According to His Writings’.

The original English translation was done by Ḥaḍrat Chaudhry Muḥammad Ṣafrullāh Khān^{ra}, a Companion of the Promised Messiah^{as} who achieved great distinction as a statesman, jurist and scholar of comparative religious studies. Volume one and two were published by the London Mosque in 1979 and 1981 respectively during the lifetime of the revered translator. He also prepared the manuscripts of volumes three and four but these could not be published during his lifetime.

Second editions of volume one and two were published in 2004, and the first edition of Volume three was published in 2005. We are now happy to present the fourth volume of “The Essence of Islām,” which is also being published for the first time.

Under the direction of Vakālat-e-Taṣnīf, London, the translation was compared with the original text and compiled by Mr. Munawar Aḥmed Sa‘eed with the support of the translation team working in Baitur Raḥmān Mosque in USA.

The publishers would like to express their appreciation for the help and support provided by Maulānā Munīr-ud-Dīn Shams, Additional Vakīl-ut-Taṣnīf, who supervised the project and provided the vital link for seeking guidance from Ḥaḍrat Mirzā Masroor Aḥmad, Khalīfatul Masīḥ V^{aba}. In Rabwah, Vakālat-e-Taṣnīf, headed by Professor Chaudhry

Muḥammad ‘Alī reviewed the document, incorporated the verses of the Holy Qur’ān, added Urdu and Persian texts, and provided guidance in translating some difficult parts. Chaudhry Sahib was assisted by Dr. Muhammad Shafiq Sehgal, Raja Ata-ul-Mannan and Tahir Mahmood Mubashar.

In addition to some of those listed in the earlier Publishers’ Notes, the following members rendered valuable services for this volume: ‘Ayesha Usmān, Jaleel Akbar, Luqmān Ṭāhir Maḥmood, Rāsh-dah Rānā and Ṣiddīqa Sājīd.

May Allah the Almighty give the best reward and grant abundant blessings, both in this world and in the hereafter, to all those who have assisted us in one way or the other, in the preparation of these volumes.

The system used for references is the same as adopted in Volumes I, II and III. All references, unless otherwise noted, are from the Holy Qur’ān. In the text, the references to the Holy Qur’ān are given exactly as they were given in the original writings. In the footnotes, references are given in the modern numerical system. In these references, we have counted *Bismillāhir Raḥmānir Raḥīm* as the first verse and have used the numerical system in which the first number refers to the *Sūrah* (chapter) and the second number refers to the *Āyah* (verse).

References to the Books of the Promised Messiah^{as} are based on the London Edition of the Rūḥānī

Khazā'in published in 1984. References to Malfūzāt and Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt are also based on the London edition.

Please note that this volume also includes references from the following source:

“Taqrīreīn” which refers to a collection of the speeches made by the Promised Messiah^{as} during Jalsa Salana Qādiān on 29th and 30th December, 1904 and published in 1905.

The following abbreviations have been used in this book; readers are requested to recite the full salutations when reading the book:

sa. An abbreviation for *ṣal-lallāhu ‘alaihi wa sal-lam*, meaning “May peace and blessings of Allah be upon him,” is written after the name of the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}.

as. An abbreviation for *‘alaihis salām*, meaning “May peace be upon him,” is written after the name of Prophets other than the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

ra. An abbreviation for *raḍi-Allāho ‘anhu/‘anhā/‘anhum* meaning, “May Allah be pleased with him/her/them,” is written after the names of the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and of the Promised Messiah^{as}.

In transliterating Arabic words we have followed the following system adopted by the Royal Asiatic Society.

ḥ at the beginning of a word, pronounced as a, i, u preceded by a very slight aspiration, like h in the English word ‘honour’.

ث	<i>th</i> , pronounced like <i>th</i> in the English word ‘thing’.
ح	<i>h</i> , a guttural aspirate, stronger than <i>h</i> .
خ	<i>kh</i> , pronounced like the Scotch <i>ch</i> in ‘loch’.
ذ	<i>dh</i> , pronounced like the English <i>th</i> in ‘that’.
ص	<i>s</i> , strongly articulated <i>s</i> .
ض	<i>d</i> , similar to the English <i>th</i> in ‘this’.
ط	<i>t</i> , strongly articulated palatal <i>t</i> .
ظ	<i>z</i> , strongly articulated <i>z</i> .
ع	‘, a strong guttural, the pronunciation of which must be learnt by the ear.
غ	<i>gh</i> , a sound approached very nearly in the <i>r</i> ‘ <i>grasseye</i> ’ in French, and in the German <i>r</i> . It requires the muscles of the throat to be in the ‘gargling’ position whilst pronouncing it.
ق	<i>q</i> , a deep guttural <i>k</i> sound.
ئ	’, a sort of catch in the voice.

Short vowels are represented by *a* for — (like *u* in ‘bud’); *i* for — (like *i* in ‘bid’); *u* for — (like *oo* in ‘wood’); the long vowels by *ā* for — or *ī* (like *a* in ‘father’); *ī* for — or — (like *ee* in ‘deep’); *ai* for — (like *i* in ‘site’); *ū* for — (like *oo* in ‘root’); *au* for — (resembling *ou* in ‘sound’).

Please note that in transliterated words the letter ‘e’ is to be pronounced as in ‘prey’ which rhymes with ‘day’; however the pronunciation is flat without the element of

English diphthong. If in Urdu and Persian words 'e' is lengthened a bit more it is transliterated as 'ei' to be pronounced as 'ei' in 'feign' without the element of diphthong thus 'ے' is transliterated as 'Kei'. For the nasal sound of 'n' we have used the symbol 'ñ'. Thus Urdu word 'میں' would be transliterated as 'meiñ'.^{*}

The consonants not included above have the same phonetic value as in the principal languages of Europe.

The words in the text in normal brackets () and in between the long dashes — are the words of the Promised Messiah^{as} and if any explanatory words or phrases are added by the publisher for the purpose of clarification, they are put in square brackets [].

Please note that headings that appear in *italics* throughout this book are part of the original text of the Promised Messiah^{as} and the headings that are not in *italics* are added by the publisher.

May Allah accept our humble efforts and make this blessed task a source of guidance for many. Āmīn.

The Publishers

* These transliterations are not included in the system of transliteration by Royal Asiatic Society. [Publisher]

1

FAMILY AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND

Genealogy

My genealogy runs as follows:

My name is Ghulām Aḥmad, son of Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā Šāhib, son of Mirzā ‘Aṭā Muḥammad Šāhib, son of Mirzā Gul Muḥammad Šāhib, son of Mirzā Faiḍ Muḥammad Šāhib, son of Mirzā Muḥammad Qā’im Šāhib, son of Mirzā Muḥammad Aslam Šāhib, son of Mirzā Muḥammad Dilāwar Šāhib, son of Mirzā Alāh-Dīn Šāhib, son of Mirzā Jā’far Beg Šāhib, son of Mirzā Muḥammad Beg Šāhib, son of Mirzā ‘Abdul Bāqī Šāhib, son of Mirzā Muḥammad Sultān Šāhib, son of Mirzā Hādī Beg Šāhib, who is our common ancestor.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 13, p. 172, sub-footnote]

Family History¹

My family history is as follows: My name is Ghulām Ahmad and my father's name was Ghulām Murtaḍā and my grandfather's name was ‘Aṭā Muḥammad and my great grandfather's name was Gul Muḥam-

¹ The remaining part of the chapter is a continuous narration; headings have been added by the Publisher. [Publisher]

mad. As stated elsewhere, our family is Mughal Bar-lās and it appears from my ancestral documents, which are preserved to this day, that they arrived in this country from Samarqand and that they were accompanied by about two hundred followers and servants and members of the family.

Our ancestor arrived here in the capacity of a respected chieftain and settled down in this place, which was at that time an uninhabited wasteland, situated approximately 50 *kose*² North-East of Lahore. He established at this place a town, which he called Islāmpūr and which subsequently became known as Islāmpūr Qāḍī Mājhi. In the course of time people forgot the word Islāmpūr, and Mājhi was also dropped and the name remained simply as Qāḍī, which later became Qāḍī and was finally converted to Qāḍiān.

The reason why this place was called Qāḍī Mājhi was that this tract of land, which was about 60 *kose*³ in length, was known as Mājha probably because buffaloes abounded here, and buffalo is *majh* in Hindi. As our ancestors were not only the landlords of the whole of this tract but were also invested with ruling powers over this area, they became known as Qāḍī.

I am not aware why our ancestors migrated to this country from Samarqand, but ancient documents indicate that in their county of origin they were also

² Approximately 75 miles. [Publisher]

³ Approximately 90 miles. [Publisher]

respected chieftains and rulers and that they had to leave their country on account of some tribal rivalry and conflict. On their arrival here, the reigning monarchs granted them several villages by way of estate and they established a permanent state in this neighbourhood.

In the early days of Sikh rule, my great grandfather Mirzā Gul Muḥammad was a well-known chieftain in this area and his estate comprised eighty-five villages. In consequence of continuous raids by the Sikhs, he lost several of his villages and yet such was his generosity that, as a gesture of sympathy, he gifted several of his remaining villages to some Muslim landlords who had been evicted from their land, and these remain in their possession till this day. In those disturbed times he was an independent chieftain and about five hundred people were entertained at his table. About one hundred scholars, divines and *Huffāz*⁴ stayed with him and were paid sufficient stipends. In his company the talk mostly revolved around religious subjects. All his dependents and relatives were regular in their worship of God. Even the maidservants who ground corn were regular in their five daily prayers and *Tahajjud*.

The respectable Muslims of the neighbourhood, most of whom were Afghans, referred to Qādiān, which was then called Islāmpūr, as Mecca, because in those disturbed times this blessed town was a

⁴ *Huffāz*: People who have committed the Holy Qur'ān to memory.
[Publisher]

place of refuge for every Muslim. Most other places were full of disbelief, disobedience and tyranny, while Qādiān was well-known for its adherence to Islam, piety, purity and justice. I have myself heard from those who had lived close to that time that in those days Qādiān was like a garden in which flourished hundreds of supporters of the faith, divines, scholars and brave and respectable men.

There were many tales current in this neighbourhood that Mirzā Gul Muḥammad Ṣāḥib, the late, was an outstanding personality among the righteous people from whom proceeded many astonishing acts which bordered on the miraculous. Many seekers after God, scholars and pious men had come to Qādiān to be among his associates. It is surprising that some of his near miraculous actions are so well-known that they were vouched for by a large number of irreligious people. In short, in addition to this position as chieftain, he had great reputation for integrity, righteousness, manly courage, high resolve, support of the faith, and sympathy for the Muslims. All his associates were pious people of good conduct, jealous for the faith, averse to disobedience and evil, and possessing courageous and commanding personalities.

I have often heard my father relate that on one occasion a Minister of the Mughal Government—whose title was *Ghiāth-ud-Daulah*—came to Qādiān. Having observed the statesmanship, intelligence, courage, high resolve, perseverance and wisdom of

Mirzā Gul Muḥammad Ṣāhib, and having witnessed his righteousness and piety and the decorum of his audience, and finding him inspired by the spirit of support for Islam and help for the faith, and seeing that those who were associated with him were pious and courageous people and carried themselves with dignity, he was much overcome with emotion. He said that if he had known that in this backward tract there lived a member of the Mughal family who was well equipped with all the royal qualities, he would have endeavoured that in these times, when the royal family was afflicted with indolence, inability and corruption, such a one should have been seated on the throne at Delhi to fully safeguard the Islamic Kingdom.

It might be of interest to mention that my great grandfather, the said Mirzā Gul Muḥammad, died of hiccups and some other complications. When his illness overpowered him, his physicians became unanimous in their opinion that if he were to use liquor for a few days, it might prove helpful in his treatment, but no one had the courage to mention this to him. Finally some of them indicated this to him indirectly. He replied that if God Almighty desired to heal him He could bring about the healing through any of several medicines and that he was not willing to seek his recovery through the use of such a vile thing as liquor. He added that he was quite reconciled to the Divine decree. He finally died after a few days of the same disorder. His death had been

decreed but he left behind the pious memory that he preferred death to the use of liquor. People have recourse to every kind of device in order to escape death but he preferred death to disobedience of God. Sad indeed is the plight of some Nawābs and some wealthy and affluent people who, during their brief span of life, set at naught God and His commandments, sever all relationships with Him and disobey Him openly and use liquor like water. Thus they not only lead sinful lives but also cut down their days on earth and die quickly in consequence of various fearful disorders and leave behind an ill example for coming generations.

In short, when my great grandfather died he was succeeded by his talented son, my grandfather Mirzā ‘Aṭā Muḥammad. During his time, in God’s wisdom, the Sikhs overcame him after a struggle. My late grandfather had recourse to various devices for the safeguarding of his estate but as the Divine decree was not favourable he failed of his purpose and none of his projects were fulfilled and the Sikhs gradually deprived him of all his estate, leaving him in occupation of Qādiān alone. Qādiān at that time was like a citadel with four towers, which were manned by soldiers and a few cannons. It was surrounded by a wall twenty-two feet high and wide enough for three carts being driven along it side by side. It came to pass that a party of Sikhs known as Rām Gārhiās obtained entrance into Qādiān by permission and then treacherously took possession of it. At that time our family

faced ruin. They were taken captives like the Israelites, and all their belongings and properties were looted. Several mosques and fine houses were demolished and gardens were cut down out of ignorance and bigotry. Some of the mosques were turned into Dharamsālas⁵. One of these is still in their possession. A library belonging to our family was burnt down. It contained five hundred manuscript copies of the Holy Qur'ān, which were disrespectfully burnt. In the end, upon second thoughts, the Sikhs directed our family to depart from Qādiān and all men and women were seated in carts and expelled, whereafter they took refuge in one of the Punjab states. After a short while my grandfather was poisoned by his enemies. Then, during the latter part of Ranjīt Singh's rule, my father Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā returned to Qādiān and five of the villages, which had belonged to his father, were restored to him. In the meantime, Ranjīt Singh had suppressed the smaller states and had consolidated them into a large state for himself. He had also captured all our villages and his rule now extended from Lahore to Peshawar and down to Ludhiana. Thus, after having been dispossessed of our estate, the remaining villages were also taken over by Ranjīt Singh and we were left with only five of them. Nevertheless, as head of an ancient family, my father Mirzā Ghulām Murtaḍā was a well-known Chieftain in this neighbourhood.....Sir Lepel Griffin in his book

⁵ Charitable rest houses.

Chiefs of Punjab has made mention of my father. He was very popular with the officials of Government and, as a gesture of approbation, the Deputy Commissioner and Commissioner often came to visit him. This is a brief account of my family.

Early Life

I was born around 1839 or 1840, during the latter part of the Sikh rule. In 1857, I was 16 or 17 years of age and had not reached manhood. My father had been beset by great difficulties before my birth and at one time he even had to travel through Hindustan on foot. But with my birth he began to experience a change for the better in his circumstances. It was by the sheer mercy of God Almighty that I did not partake of any of the misfortunes of my father. Nor did I participate in any of the days of rule and statehood of my ancestors. Like Jesus^{as}, who had the nominal title of Prince because of his descent from David^{as}, and who had lost all the insignia of statehood, I too can say that I am descended from rulers and heads of state. Perhaps this has happened so that I should have this resemblance with Jesus^{as} as well. Though I cannot say like Jesus^{as} that I have nowhere to lay my head, yet I know that all the rule and statehood of my ancestors has nearly come to an end. This happened so that God Almighty might establish a new hierarchy as indicated in a revelation vouchsafed to me by the Holy One, and which is mentioned in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*:

سبحان اللہ تبارک و تعالیٰ زاد محمدک ینقطع ابائک و یدء منک

That is, Holy is Allāh, Blessed and High. He will raise thy status above thy ancestors. From now on, He will cut off all reference to thy forefathers and will begin with thee.

Also, He revealed to me the glad tiding:

میں تجھے برکت دوں گا اور بہت برکت دوں گا یہاں تک

کہ بادشاہ تیرے کپڑوں سے برکت ڈھونڈیں گے

...I received my elementary education at home. When I was 6 or 7 years old, a teacher who was learned in Persian was employed as my tutor. He taught me the Holy Qur'ān and a few Persian books. His name was Faḍl Ilāhī. When I was about 10 years old, an Arabic teacher, whose name was Faḍl Aḥmad, was appointed as my tutor. I conceive that since my elementary education was by way of sowing the seed of Divine *Faḍl* [Grace], the names of both my tutors begin with *Faḍl*. Maulavī Ṣāḥib, who was a pious and respectable gentleman, taught me with great attention and diligence. From him I learnt some rules of Arabic grammar. When I was 17 or 18, for a few years I studied under another Maulavī Ṣāḥib whose name was Gul 'Alī Shāh. He too had been employed by my father for my tuition at Qādiān. From him I acquired further knowledge of Arabic grammar, logic, philosophy, etc., according

⁶ "I shall grant thee blessing upon blessing, until kings shall seek blessings from thy garments." [Translator]

to the then current syllabus and as far as God Almighty so willed. My father was an expert physician and under him I studied some books on medicine.

Early Services to Father and Family

By this time I had become so fond of reading that I gave little attention to anything else. My father repeatedly admonished me to cut down on my study of books for he was afraid that too much devotion to them might affect my health and he was also anxious that laying aside books I should begin to take an interest in his affairs and should share his responsibilities. And this is what happened. He was at that time engaged in litigation in the British Courts for the recovery of some of our ancestral villages and finally succeeded in employing me in that pursuit. For a long time I remained so occupied. I have always regretted that a good deal of my precious time was wasted in this useless pursuit. My father also committed the management of our landed property to me. But as I was by nature and disposition averse to such occupations, my father would sometimes be annoyed with me. He was most kind and affectionate towards me but he desired that I should become a man of the world like my contemporaries, but this was something I was much averse to.

On one occasion, the Commissioner was coming to Qādiān and my father asked me repeatedly that I should go out two or three *kose*⁷ to welcome him.

⁷ Approximately 3 to 5 miles. [Publisher]

But I was wholly disinclined to do so and was also not feeling well. Therefore I could not go. This also became a cause for my father's displeasure. In short, he wished me to completely occupy myself with worldly affairs, which I could not do. Nevertheless, out of goodwill and in order to earn spiritual merit, but not for the sake of any worldly gain, I devoted myself to serving my father and for his sake I occupied myself with worldly affairs and also supplicated for him. He believed fully that I was dutiful towards my parents and often used to say that he desired me to participate in worldly affairs out of a sense of sympathy for me though he realized that faith—the thing in which I was most interested—was alone worth pursuing and that he himself was only wasting his time.

In the same way, while I was under his care I had most unwillingly spent a few years in the employment of the British Government, but he found that separation from me sat heavy on him and so he directed me to resign from my post. This I gladly did and returned home. My brief experience of official life made me realize that most people in that position lead very undesirable lives. Very few of them carry out their religious duties properly and few of them restrain themselves from indulgence in the illicit pleasures which are meant as a trial for them. I was surprised with their way of life. I found that most of them were eager to collect money lawfully or unlawfully and all their efforts in this brief life were

directed towards the world. Only a few did I find who, out of regard for the Divine majesty, cultivated the higher moral values like meekness, nobility, chastity, courtesy, lowliness, humility, sympathy for mankind, purity of heart, eating lawful food, speaking the truth and righteousness. I found most of them afflicted with arrogance, transgression, neglect of religious values, and all types of evil morals. As the wisdom of God Almighty had decreed that I should have experience of all types of people I had to keep company with those of every kind. All this time I spent in great constraint and unease. As the author of *Mathnawī Rūmī* says:

من بہر جمعیت نالاں شدم جفت خوش حالاں و بد حالاں شدم
ہر کسے از عن خود شد یار من وز درون من بخت اسرار من⁸

When I returned to my father I became occupied with the management of our land but the greater part of my time was devoted to the study of the Holy Qur'ān and its commentaries as well as Ḥadīth. I would often read out portions from these books to my father, who was mostly melancholy on account of the failure of his efforts to recover a part of his patrimony. He had spent some seventy thousand rupees in the prosecution of those cases, but the result was failure. We had lost those villages long ago and their recovery was a chimera.

⁸ I joined every kind of company—those who lived well and those who lived ill. Everyone in his own concept became a friend of mine but none of them sought to discover my inner secret. [Translator]

Last Days of His Father

On account of this failure my father was always restless and melancholy. Observing these conditions, I was enabled to carry out a pure change in my own life. The bitter life led by my father taught me to value a clean life free from all worldly impurities. Although my father still owned a few villages and was in receipt of an annual stipend from the British Government and also enjoyed a pension for his services, all this was as nothing compared to what he had experienced in his younger days. This is why he was always sad and melancholy and often said that had he striven for the faith as much as he had striven for the world he would have been a saint of some repute. He often recited the verse:

عمر بگزشت و نماز است جز ایامے چند
بہ کہ در یاد کسے صبح کنم شامے چند⁹

And I often saw him recite this verse which he had written, and he would be greatly moved:

از در تو اے کس ہر بے کسے
نیست امیدم کہ روم نا امید¹⁰

Sometimes I heard him recite his own verse:

⁹ My life is past and only a few days remain. It would be better if I were to spend my nights in the remembrance of God. [Translator]

¹⁰ O Succour of every helpless one! Surely, I can't return empty-handed from Thy door! [Translator]

بآب دیدہ عشاق و خاکپائے کسے

مراد لے ست کہ درخوں تپد بجائے کسے¹¹

With each passing day, he was more and more grieved by the thought that he would face his Creator empty-handed. He often regretted that he had wasted his life in the pursuit of useless worldly objectives. On one occasion, he related that he had seen the Holy Prophet^{sa} in his dream proceeding in great dignity towards his house like a mighty monarch. My father advanced to welcome him and, when he had come close to him, he thought that he should make a present to him and put his hand in his pocket in which he found only one Rupee. Examining it closely, he discovered that it was a false coin. Perceiving this my father's eyes became wet and he woke up. He interpreted this dream as meaning that love of God and of the Holy Prophet^{sa} mixed with worldly ambition was like a false coin.

My father used to say that the last days of his father's life had also been spent in grief and sorrow, just like him. In whatever direction he advanced he met with failure, and he would often recite this couplet of his father (my great grandfather), of which I remember only one line:

جب تدبیر کرتا ہوں تو پھر تقدیر ہنستی ہے¹²

¹¹ With the tears of a lover and being the dust of someone's feet, my heart beats in blood in place of someone else. [Translator]

¹² Whenever I contrive to do something, destiny mocks me. [Translator]

In his old age my father's grief and sorrow multiplied manifold. About six months before, he built a mosque in the middle of the town—which is now the town's main mosque—and directed that he should be buried in a corner of that mosque so that he should constantly hear the name of God Almighty being glorified, and this might perchance become the means of procuring forgiveness. It so happened that when the construction of the mosque was almost completed and just a few bricks remained to be laid in the courtyard, my father died of dysentery after a few days illness and was buried in the corner of the mosque which he had specified.

اللهم ارحمه و ادخله الجنة¹³

He was 80 or 85 years of age when he died. His sorrow over wasting his life in the pursuit of the world still affects me painfully and I realize that everyone who seeks the world must carry this sorrow with him. Let him who seeks understanding understand this.

Early Revelations

I was 34 or 35 years of age when my father died. In a dream, I had been warned that his death was approaching. I was then in Lahore and hastened to Qādiān. He was suffering from dysentery but I had no apprehension whatsoever that he would die the day after my arrival. In fact, there had been some

¹³ O Allāh, have mercy upon him and usher him into Paradise. Āmīn.
[Translator]

change for the better in his condition and he could even sit for long hours. The following day, we were all with him at noon when he kindly suggested that I should go and have some rest, for it was the month of June and the heat was intense. I retired into an upper room and a servant began to knead my feet. Presently I fell into a light slumber and then came to me the revelation:

والسما والطارق

That is, We call to witness the heaven where all decrees originate, and We call to witness that misfortune which will fall today after sunset.

I was given to understand that this revelation was by way of commiseration on behalf of God Almighty, as my father would unfortunately die that very day after sunset. Holy is Allāh! How glorious is the Great God that He commiserates on the death of a person who died sorrowing over his wasted life! Most people would be surprised at this interpretation of mine that God Almighty commiserated with me. It should, however, be remembered that when God, glorified be His name, treats someone mercifully, He deals with him like a friend. We read in the traditions that on certain occasions God Almighty laughed. This also is a similar kind of expression.

To sum up, when I received this revelation, which presaged the death of my father, the thought passed through my mind, because I was only a human, that some of the means of income which were linked to my father would now be closed and we might be

confronted with all sorts of difficulties. Thereupon I received another revelation:

اليس الله بكاف عبده

That is to say, is not Allāh sufficient for His servant?

This revelation conveyed great comfort and satisfaction to me and it firmly fixed itself in my heart like an iron nail. I swear by God Almighty in Whose hand is my life that He has fulfilled this comforting revelation in a manner that was beyond my imagination. He has provided for me as no father could have provided for anyone. I have been the recipient of His continuous bounties, which I find impossible to deny.

My father died the same day after sunset. This was the first day on which I experienced a sign of Divine mercy through revelation concerning which I cannot imagine that it would ever cease to have effect during my lifetime. I had the words of the revelation carved on a semi-precious stone and set it in a ring, which I have with me securely. Nearly 40 years of my life passed under the care of my father, and with his departure from this life, I began to receive Divine revelations continuously and abundantly.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 162-195, footnote]

2

STATUS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH^{AS}

امروز قوم من نشنا سد مقام من
روزے بگریه یاد کند وقتِ خوشترم

**“Today my people do not recognize my status;
The day will come when they will recall my blessed time
with tears.”**

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, p. 184]

All Bounties earned through the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Holy Qur'ān

Through the blessing of obedience and love for the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and by virtue of following God's Holy Word, the Gracious One has bestowed the singular favour of His converse upon this humble one. He has graced me with spiritual knowledge, and has revealed many hidden secrets to me. He has filled the bosom of this humble one with countless verities and points of wisdom. He has informed me repeatedly that all these gifts and favours, and all this grace and beneficence, and all this kindness and attention, and all these bounties and support, and all this converse and discourse are entirely due to my obedience and love for the Seal of Prophets^{sa}.

جمالِ ہم نشیں در من اثر کرد
وگر نه من هماں خاکم که هستم¹⁴

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol.1, pp. 645-646, footnote 11]

Divine Source of the Revelations

I believe in all the revelations which are being bestowed upon me from God Almighty as I believe in the Torah, the Gospels, and the Holy Qur'ān. I have knowledge and cognizance of God... Therefore, I fully partake of His pure revelation as far as a human being can partake of it when in

¹⁴ The beauty of my companion has made its imprint upon me; Otherwise, I am the same dust that I have always been.[Publisher]

perfect nearness to Him. When a man is put into the blazing fire of Divine love—as all Prophets^{as} have been—then the revelations which he receives are not accompanied by confused dreams. Rather, just as dry fodder is burned in an oven, so are all his apprehensions and self-induced thoughts put to fire, and there remains only the pure revelation from God. And such revelation is bestowed only upon those who, in this very world, take the colour of the Prophets^{as} with complete purification, love and devotion, as on page 504, line 18 of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*,¹⁵ the following revelation is mentioned with regard to myself:

جری اللہ فی حلل الانبیاء

That is, ‘An appointed one of God, in the mantle of Prophets.’ Therefore, I have not been sent with doubtful and conjectural revelation. Rather, I have been sent with definite and certain revelation....

I declare in the name of God, Who controls my life, that I have been informed with categorical arguments—and I am informed continuously—that whatever is conveyed to me and is vouchsafed upon me as revelation is from God and not from Satan. I believe in it as I believe in the existence of the sun and the moon, or as I believe that two and two make four. It is true, however, that when I give my opinion with regard to the religious law or when I interpret a

¹⁵ This reference appears on page 501 of the London Edition of *Ruhānī Khazā'in*. [Publisher]

revelation on my own, it is possible that I might make a mistake, but in such a case I am not permitted to persist in error and Divine mercy soon points out for me the way to its true interpretation. Indeed, my soul is nurtured in the lap of angels.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 154-155]

و جذبنى ربى اليه و احسن مثنوى و اسبغ على من نعماء الدين- وقادنى
من تدنسات الدنيا الى حظيرة قدسه و اعطانى ما اعطانى و جعلنى من
الملهمين المحدثين- فما كان عندى من مال الدنيا و خيلها و افراسها
غير انى أعطيت جياذ الاقلام و رزقت جواهر الكلام و أعطيت من نور
يؤمنى العثار و يبين لى الآثار فهذه الدولة الالهية السماوية قد اغتنى و
جبرت عيلى و اضاء تنى و نورت ليلتى و ادخلتنى فى المنعمين-

And my Lord has drawn me towards Himself and has appointed a good place for me and has perfected His favours unto me and, having rescued me from involvement with worldly affairs and undesirable indulgences, has conducted me to His holy place and has bestowed upon me that which He has bestowed and has made me among the recipients of revelation and the *Muḥaddathīn*. I did not possess any worldly provision nor did I own horses or command cavalry, but I have been bestowed steeds of the pen and have been provided with the jewellery of letters and have been favoured with the light which saves me from stumbling and guides me aright. This divine and heavenly wealth has enriched me, has removed my poverty, has illumined me, and has lit up my night

and has admitted me to the rank of those who have been favoured with bounties.

[Nūr-ul-Haq, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, Part 1, vol. 8, pp. 38-39]

میں وہ پانی ہوں کہ آیا آسماں سے وقت پر
میں وہ ہوں نورِ خدا جس سے ہوا دن آشکار¹⁶

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 145]

I cannot say what I have done that has made me the recipient of this divine favour, but I feel my heart involuntarily drawn towards God Almighty with such deep loyalty that it cannot be restrained by any other consideration. So all this is pure Divine bounty. I have never submitted myself to rigorous physical discipline, nor have I subjected myself to hard exercises like some contemporary Ṣūfīs, nor did I undertake retreat in complete mystic solitude. Nor, indeed, have I done anything by of asceticism which is contrary to the practice of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, or which may be objectionable according to the Word of God Almighty. Indeed, I have always felt abhorred by the fakirs and those who introduce all sorts of innovations in faith. However, during the lifetime of my father, when his death was approaching, it so happened that I saw in a dream a holy man who was elderly and had a pure countenance, and he pointed out to me that it is the tradition of the family of the Holy Prophet^{sa} to observe some days of fasting in

¹⁶ I am the water that has descended from heaven at its due time; I am the Divine light, which has illumined the day. [Translator]

order to attract the heavenly lights; thus pointing out that I too should observe this tradition. Hence, I thought it appropriate to observe fasts for some time. But, at the same time, I felt that it would be better not to disclose this to anyone. So I would have my meals delivered to me in the men's quarters of the house and gave them away to some orphans with whom I had arranged that they should come at specified times. Thus I would spend all day fasting. No one, except God, knew about these fasts. After a few weeks, I surmised that it was no difficult matter for me to fast when I was still having one full meal everyday. I, therefore, decided to start cutting down on my food intake. I started reducing my food gradually, until I would subsist on one chapatti in the entire day and night. I continued reducing my food in the same manner until I reduced my food intake to a few ounces in 24 hours. This I continued for approximately eight or nine months. Although I was taking so little food as could not suffice even for an infant two or three months old, God Almighty protected me from all ill-effect and illness.

Wonders Experienced through Fasting

Among the wonders of this kind of fasting that I experienced are the fine visions which were bestowed upon me during that time. I met some past Prophets^{as} and some of the exalted Muslim *Auliya'*.¹⁷ Once—in a state of complete wakefulness—I met the Holy

¹⁷ Men of God or Saints. [Publisher]

Prophet^{sa} along with Ḥassan^{ra}, Ḥussain^{ra}, ‘Alī^{ra} and Fāṭimah^{ra}. This was not a dream, but something that I experienced in a state of wakefulness. I met many holy people in this manner, but it would take long to describe all those meetings. Moreover, I was granted views of spiritual lights that were represented in columns of red and green, the beauty of which cannot possibly be described in words. These columns of light, some of them shining white and others green and red, rose straight towards heaven and their sight filled my heart with delight. Nothing can be compared to the joy that my heart and soul experienced in beholding these columns. I believe that these columns were a representation of the love between God and man. It was a light that proceeded from the heart upwards and there was another light that descended from above and the two together took on the shape of a column. These are spiritual matters which are beyond the ken of the world. The world cannot recognize them as they are far removed from its eyes, but there are some in the world who are made aware of them. In short, due to this prolonged fasting, wonders were revealed to me in the form of visions of various kinds and forms.

Physical Discipline and Hardship

In addition, one benefit that I derived from this prolonged practice of fasting was that after having subjected myself to this discipline, I found myself capable of enduring hunger and thirst over long periods, if the need should ever arise. I have often

thought that if a corpulent person, who is also a wrestler, had to starve along with me, he would die before I could feel any acute need for food. This experience taught me that one can progress stage by stage in starving oneself and that until one's body becomes accustomed to such privations a comfort-loving person is not fit to accomplish stages of spiritual progress. But I would not advise everyone to embark upon such a discipline, nor did I do so of my own accord. I have known many ignorant dervishes who adopted a course of hard physical discipline and in the end lost their sanity and spent the rest of their lives in madness or became afflicted with various diseases such as tuberculosis, etc.

Not all humans possess similar mental faculties. Those whose faculties are naturally weak cannot bear any physical discipline. Very soon, they are afflicted with some dangerous disease. It is better that one should not subject oneself to a rigorous physical discipline on one's own. Rather one should adopt the faith of simple people. Of course, if one receives a revelation from God and it is not opposed to the magnificent Shariah of Islam, it must be carried out. However, the foolish fakirs of today teach disciplines which do not result in any good. One should stay away from them.

Keep in mind that it was on the basis of a clear vision from God Almighty that I carried out rigorous physical discipline for eight or nine months and

tasted hunger and thirst. Then I stopped its continuous practice, but did revert to it occasionally.

Spiritual Discipline

All of this happened, but there still remained the spiritual discipline. I have also come to partake of this in these days when I have to endure the Maulavīs with their foul tongue, loose talk, declaration of apostasy, and insults and other ignorant ones with their curses and foul language. In my opinion, during the thirteen hundred years since the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, no one else could have partaken of such treatment.

Being declared an apostate, I was considered worse than the infidels, Christians and atheists. The fools of the nation, through announcements and newspapers, gave me such bad names as are not to be found in the case of anyone else. I am, therefore, grateful to Allāh that I was tested with both kinds of hardship.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 195-201, footnote]

God Almighty knows—and He is the best witness over everything—that the first thing that has been granted to me in His way is a **pure heart**—that is, a heart that had no real attachment with anyone except God, the Lord of honour and glory.

There was a time when I was young and now I am old, but at no time in my life have I had any real attachment to anything except God, the Mighty, and the Glorious... Because of this love of mine, I have never been reconciled to any religion, the doctrines

of which were in conflict with the Greatness and Unity of God, or involved any dishonour to Him.

That is why I did not approve of the Christian faith, for at every step it dishonours God, the Mighty, and the Glorious... In the same way the Hindū faith, one branch of which is the Ārya sect, falls far short of the truth. According to them, every particle in this world is self-existing and has no Creator. Thus, the Hindūs do not believe in God, without Whom nothing comes into existence and without Whose support nothing can continue to exist... I have reflected deeply and I have found both these religions opposed to the truth. It is not possible for me to recount here all the inhibitions and despair that are encountered in these faiths in one's search for God Almighty. It is enough to state in brief that these two religions afford no guidance to God Who is sought by pure souls and by finding Whom man achieves salvation in this very life and the gates of divine light are opened for him and perfect love can be generated through His perfect recognition. On the contrary, these religions push their followers into the pits of ruin. There are other similar religions in the world, but they all fail to lead a votary to the One God, Who has no associate. They leave the seeker in darkness.

These are all the religions in the study of which I spent a great portion of my life. I reflected over their principles with honesty and diligence, but I found them all divorced and estranged from truth. The

blessed religion, the name of which is Islam, is the only faith that leads to God Almighty and is the only faith, which fulfils all the pure demands of human nature... The God of Islam does not shut the door of His grace upon anyone. He calls everyone to come to Him and the door is opened for those who eagerly run towards Him.

Bounties and Titles

I have, by the sheer grace of God, and not on account of any merit of my own, been accorded a full measure of the bounty, which was bestowed before me on the Prophets and Messengers^{as} and the Chosen ones of God. It would not have been possible for me to be granted this bounty had I not followed the ways of my lord and master, the Pride of the Prophets, the Best of Mankind, Muḥammad^{sa}. Whatever I have been given, I have been given due to this adherence and I know through my true and perfect knowledge that no man can reach God except through following the Holy Prophet^{sa} nor can anyone arrive at a full understanding of God except through him.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 59-65]

Some ignorant people wrongly imagine that I claim to be a recipient of revelation by way of imposture. In truth, this is the act of the Powerful God, Who created the heavens and earth and the universe. Whenever faith in God declines, **someone like me** is raised; God speaks to him and manifests His won-

ders through him until people understand that **God exists. I announce openly** that if a person, whether Asian or European, comes to stay in my company, he will soon discover the truth of my statements.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, p.18]

Reformer of the Fourteenth Century

When the thirteenth century drew to a close and the beginning of the fourteenth century approached, I was informed by God Almighty, through **revelation** that **I am the Reformer of the fourteenth century**. I received the revelation:

الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ - لَتُنذِرَ قَوْمًا مَّا أُنذِرَ آبَاءَهُمْ وَلَسَتْ لِيَنَ
سَبِيلَ الْمُجْرِمِينَ - قُلْ إِنِّي أُمِرْتُ وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ -

That is, God has taught you the Qur'ān and has expounded its true meanings to you so that you should warn these people—who through generations of neglect and not having been warned have fallen into error—of their evil end, so that the way of those offenders may be made manifest who do not desire to follow the right path after it has been openly declared. Tell them: I have been commissioned by God and am the foremost of believers.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 201-202, footnote]

According to His unchanging law that whenever darkness prevails, God Almighty attends to the support of the Muslims and appoints some special

servant of His, who is chosen for the purpose of the revival of Islam and for the good of the people, this humble one has been raised at the turn of the century having been awarded the title of *Mujaddid* [Reformer of the age] by God Almighty. I have been granted such knowledge and resources for stamping out the evils that were spreading in the world as cannot become available to anyone unless these are bestowed by the special favour of God.

[*Karāmāt-uş-Şādiqīn, Rūḥānī Khazā'in* vol. 7, p. 45]

When God Almighty, observing the condition of the world and finding the earth filled with every type of disobedience, sin and misguidance, appointed me for the propagation of the truth and the reform of people and the time was.....the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fourteenth century, then I—in obedience to this command—sent forth the call through written announcements and speeches, that **I am that person**, who was to come from God at the turn of the century for revival of the faith. The purpose was that I should re-establish the faith which had disappeared from the earth, and pull mankind towards reform and righteousness and truthfulness through the power and strength that God had bestowed upon me and through the magnetic power of His hand. I was also destined to correct their doctrinal errors and to reform their conduct.

Messiah and Mahdī

A few years thereafter, it was made quite clear to me through Divine revelation that the Messiah, whose advent among the Muslims had been promised from the beginning, and the last Mahdī whose advent had been Divinely decreed to take place at the time of the decline of Islam and the spread of error, and who was to be guided directly by God, and who was to invite people to partake of the heavenly banquet, and whose advent had been foretold by the Holy Prophet^{sa} thirteen hundred years in advance, was none other than myself. Divine revelation was vouchsafed to me so clearly and so continuously that it left no room for doubt. Every word of such revelations found its firm place in my heart like an iron nail. These revelations were replete with grand prophecies which were most clearly fulfilled. Their regularity, number and miraculous power compelled me to affirm that they were the words of the One God Who is without associate and Who revealed the Holy Qur'ān. I do not mention the Torah and the Gospels in this context because the Torah and the Gospels have been so corrupted at the hands of their followers that they can no longer be described as the Word of God. In short, the revelation of God that descended upon me is so certain and absolute that through it I found my God. That revelation not only carried with it full certainty through heavenly signs contained therein but every portion of it—when put before the Word of God Almighty contained in the

Holy Qur'ān—proved to be in full accord with it. Heavenly signs came down like rain to confirm its truth.

[Tadhkirat-us-Shahādatain, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 3-4]

To Chiefs, Leaders, Wealthy individuals and Officers of the Government

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ¹⁸

O worthy ones of Islam, may God Almighty inspire your hearts with greater good intentions than all other faiths, and may He, in this time of crisis, make you true servants of His dear faith. In order to win His pleasure, I hereby inform you of the important fact that God Almighty has, at the turn of this fourteenth century, **appointed me** from Himself for the revival and support of the true faith of Islam, so that in this tumultuous age I would proclaim the excellences of the Holy Qur'ān and the greatness of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and—with the help of the light, blessings, miracles and divine knowledge that have been bestowed upon me—respond to all the enemies who are attacking Islam.

[Barakāt-ud-Du'ā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, p. 34]

Resemblance to Jesus son of Mary^{as}

I have been informed that I am the *Mujaddid* of the age and that my spiritual excellences bear a resem-

¹⁸ In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful. We praise Him and call down His blessings on His Noble Messenger^{sa}. [Publisher]

blance to the spiritual excellences of Jesus son of Mary^{as} and that the two closely resemble each other. In accordance with the characteristics of Prophets and Messengers and through the blessings of obedience to the Best of Mankind and the most exalted of Messengers^{sa}, I have been exalted above the great many saints who have passed before me. To follow in my footsteps is the way to salvation and happiness and blessings and to go against me is to turn away from God and to be the victim of despair.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 657]

On one occasion, I received the revelation which indicated that there was a vigorous discussion in the High Assembly in Heaven, from which I understood that God desired the revival of the faith, but that the High Assembly had not yet been apprised of the identity of the person who would revive the faith, and this was the cause of vigorous debate. It was at this time that in a dream I saw people searching for a Reformer. A man appeared and, gesturing towards me, said:

هَذَا رَجُلٌ يُحِبُّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ

i.e., this is the man who loves the Messenger of Allāh.

This meant that the principal qualification for this mission was the love of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and that this quality was to be found in me.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, p. 598 sub footnote 3]

Fulfilment of the Need of the Time

In this age of ours, every kind of abuse by the opponents has reached its climax. Vituperation, faultfinding and imposture have arrived at a limit which cannot be exceeded. At the same time, the condition of the Muslims has deteriorated to the extreme. Hundreds of innovations and all types of pagan practices and rejection of faith are observed on all sides. Therefore, most certainly this is the age in which a great Reformer should appear according to the prophecy:

مُطَهِّرُكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا¹⁹

Then all praise be to Allāh that **I am that Reformer**.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, p. 453, footnote]

I exhort every Muslim to arise for the sake of Islam, for Islam is faced with great difficulties. Help it now, for it is poor. I have come for this purpose and God Almighty has bestowed the knowledge of the Qur'ān on me and has disclosed to me the verities and realities of His Book and has given me miraculous signs, so come to me and partake of these bounties. I swear by Him in Whose hand is my life that I have been sent by God Almighty. Was it not necessary that at the turn of this century, characterized by great disturbances and all-too-obvious catastrophes, a Reformer should appear putting forth his claim clearly? You will soon recognize me through my works. The path

¹⁹ ...will clear thee from the *charges* of those who disbelieve...—Āl-e-‘Imrān, 3:56 [Publisher]

of everyone who came from God Almighty was obstructed by the lack of understanding exhibited by the scholars of his time. In the end, he was only recognized through his works, for a bitter tree does not bring forth sweet fruit and God does not bestow upon everyone the blessings that are reserved for the elect. O ye people, Islam has become very weak and is surrounded on all sides by enemies. More than three thousand objections have been raised against it. At such a time, exhibit your faith through active sympathy and be counted among the men of God. Peace be on him who follows the guidance.

[Barakāt-ud-Du'ā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 36-37]

Mission of the Promised Messiah^{as}

The reason for calling the Reformer of this age by the name of the Promised Messiah appears to be that his great task would be to put an end to the supremacy of Christianity and to repel the attacks of the Christians and to demolish their philosophy—which is opposed to the Holy Qur'ān—with strong arguments and to convey to them fully the truth of Islam. The greatest calamity for Islam in this age consists of the philosophical attacks and religious criticism by the Christians, which cannot be repelled without Divine support. It was necessary that someone should come from God Almighty to combat them.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 341]

Both Muslims and Christians, with some variations, believe that Jesus son of Mary^{as} was raised to heaven

in his physical body and would descend from heaven sometime in the latter days. I have expounded the error of this belief in this booklet and have also explained that the descent of Jesus son of Mary^{as} does not mean his bodily descent, but the advent of one who is spiritually and metaphorically like Jesus and this humble one fulfils that prophecy, both according to the pronounced criteria and according to the Divine revelation.

[Tauḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in vol. 3, p. 51]

I believe in all that which is contained in the Holy Qur'ān and in true Aḥādīth. I do not claim that I am Jesus son of Mary^{as} nor do I believe in the transmigration of souls. I only claim that I have been sent in the likeness of Jesus. As *Muḥaddathiyyat* resembles Prophethood, in the same way my spiritual condition very closely resembles the spiritual condition of Jesus son of Mary^{as}, and I am truly a Muslim.

ايها المسلمون انا منكم و امامكم منكم بامر الله تعالى²⁰

In short, I am a *Muḥaddath* from God and have been commissioned by Him. And at the same time I am a Muslim who has come in the fourteenth century as a Reformer of the faith from the Lord of the heavens and earth in the character and spirit of Jesus son of Mary^{as}. I am not an impostor.

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنِ افْتَرَى²¹

²⁰ O ye Muslims, I am one of you and am your Imam from among you by Allāh's command. [Publisher]

²¹ And surely, he who forges a lie shall perish—Ṭā Hā, 20:62 [Publisher]

God Almighty looked at the world and found it in darkness and singularized His humble servant for the reform of His creatures. Do you then wonder that according to the Divine promise a Reformer has been sent at the turn of the century? God created him in the image of whichever Prophet He chose. Was it not necessary that the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sa} should be fulfilled?

Reform, not Innovation

Brethren, I am a Reformer, not an innovator and, God forbid, I have not come to spread any innovation. I have come to proclaim the truth. I consider everything that finds no place in the Qur'ān or Ḥadīth, and is opposed to them, as heresy and negation of faith. But there are few who can reach the true meaning of the Divine Word and can comprehend its subtle mysteries. I have not added anything to, nor subtracted anything from the faith. Brethren, my faith is the same as yours. I follow the same Noble Messenger^{sa} whom you follow. The same Holy Qur'ān is my guide, my beloved and my scripture, believing in which is incumbent upon you also. It is quite true that I believe that Jesus son of Mary^{as} died and joined the company of the dead. I also believe with complete certainty that the prophecy of the coming of the Messiah has been fulfilled in me. O brethren, this belief of mine is not the product of my own imagination. Rather God Almighty has informed me, through His revelation, that I am the one who was to come in the name of Jesus son of Mary^{as}.

God has disclosed to me all the conclusive arguments which are contained in the Holy Qur'ān and the true Aḥādīth, which establish the death of Jesus son of Mary^{as}, Messenger of God, as a certainty. The Almighty God has told me repeatedly through His revelations that I have been sent in the spirit and perfection of Jesus son of Mary^{as}, to repel the *Yahūdiyyat*²² of the latter days. I am thus metaphorically the promised son of Mary, whose advent was promised at the time of *Yahūdiyyat* and the supremacy of Christianity. I have appeared in humility with spiritual power and spiritual weapons.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 231-232]

Once you have proved that Jesus has joined the dead and have impressed this fact upon the hearts of the Christians, then do believe that that will be the day of the departure of the Christian faith from the world. Bear firmly in mind that so long as their god does not die, their religion will also not die, and it is futile to indulge in any other argument with them. Their doctrine stands on just one pillar, which is the belief that Jesus son of Mary^{as} is alive in heaven. Demolish this pillar and you will not find the Christian faith anywhere in the world. As God Almighty desires to crush this pillar and to establish His Unity in Europe and Asia, He has sent me and disclosed to me through His own revelation that Jesus son of Mary^{as} has died. His revelation is:

²² Jewishness. [Publisher]

مسیح ابن مریم رسول اللہ فوت ہو چکا ہے اور اُس
 کے رنگ میں ہو کر وعدہ کے موافق تُو آیا ہے
 و کان وعد اللہ مفعولاً۔ انت معی و انت علی
 الحق المبین۔ انت مصیبٌ و معینٌ للحق۔²³

In this book, I have established the death of Jesus^{as} and his having joined the dead with very strong arguments. I have established it as a clear fact that Jesus^{as} was never resurrected, nor taken up to heaven in his physical body, but died just as all other Prophets^{as} have died. He has left this world forever. He who worships Jesus^{as} should realize that he has died and has joined the company of the dead for all times to come. You should take advantage of this book for the support of the truth and should stand firm against the Christian clergy. This question should always be the subject of your attention and you should have full trust that Jesus son of Mary^{as} has certainly joined the company of the dead.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 402-403]

Our exalted Prophet^{sa} is forever alive. To keep him alive forever, God Almighty has ordained that his spiritual and law-giving blessings should be extended to the Day of Judgement. Finally, as a continuation of his spiritual blessings, God has sent

²³ Jesus son of Mary^{as}, Messenger of Allāh, has died and you have come in this place and his spirit according to God's promise, which was bound to be fulfilled. You are with Me and you have your stand upon truth and you are the helper and supporter of the truth. [Publisher]

into the world the Promised Messiah—whose advent was essential for the completion of the edifice of Islam. It was necessary that the world should not come to an end until the dispensation of Muḥammad^{sa} had been provided with a spiritual Messiah as had been provided for the Mosaic dispensation. This is indicated in the verse:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ²⁴

Moses^{as} was provided with bounties which the earlier generations had lost, and Muḥammad^{sa} was provided with such bounties which the Mosaic dispensation had lost. Now the dispensation of Muḥammad^{sa} has replaced the Mosaic dispensation, but it is thousands of times higher in status. The ‘Like of Moses’^{sa} is more exalted than Moses^{as} and the ‘Like of the Son of Mary’ is more exalted than the Son of Mary^{as}. Not only did the Promised Messiah appear in the fourteenth century after the Holy Prophet^{sa} as Jesus son of Mary^{as} had appeared in the fourteenth century after Moses^{as}, but he appeared at a time when the condition of the Muslims was similar to the condition of the Jews at the time of the advent of Jesus son of Mary^{as}. **I am that person.** God does what He wills. Foolish is the person who fights Him and ignorant is the one who asserts in opposition to Him that He should have done thus and

²⁴ Guide us in the right path – The path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy blessings.—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

thus and not so and so. He has sent me with bright signs which are in excess of ten thousand.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, p.14]

If it is asked, what is the characteristic and spiritual power in which Jesus son of Mary^{as} and I resemble each other, the answer is that it is an overall characteristic with which our spiritual capacities have been specially invested, one aspect of which proceeds downwards and the other climbs upwards. The characteristic proceeding downward means the deep and burning sympathy for God's creatures which, having established a strong relationship between a caller towards God and his eager disciples, spreads the illuminating power inherent in the holy being of the caller towards God, throughout his living branches. By the upward proceeding characteristic is meant that higher quality of love that is compounded with firm faith and which, taking its birth by Divine design in the heart of the servant, draws the love of God Almighty towards itself. By the combination of these two loves—which are, in a sense, related to each other like male and female—a strong relationship is established between the Creator and His creatures, and the bright fire of Divine love captures the fuel-like love of the creature, giving rise to a the third characteristic—the Holy Spirit.

[Tauḍīh-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol 3, pp. 61-62]

There is no God beside the One God, but there is another Messiah, who is now speaking to you. God's jealousy brooks no second, but man's second is

there. God has **sent me** so that I should bestow sight upon the blind who have been sightless, not just for a few years, but for over nineteen hundred years!

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, p 305]

Fighting the Satanic Forces of the Age

In this age, the Holy Prophet^{sa} and Islam have been reviled in abusive writings to a degree which has no parallel among any other Prophet in any age....In this age, Satan, along with all his followers, is trying his utmost to destroy Islam. Without a doubt, this is the final battle between truth and falsehood. Thus, this age deserves the advent of a Divinely commissioned one for its reformation. And he is the Promised Messiah, who is present among you. This age required that, at this delicate moment in time, God should provide a conclusive argument with heavenly signs. These heavenly signs are now being exhibited. Heaven is eager to exhibit so many signs as would blow the trumpet of the victory of Islam in every country and every part of world. O Mighty Lord, hasten Thou the day which Thou hast willed to be made manifest. Let Thy glory shine forth in the world and let the victory of Thy faith and Thy Messenger be proclaimed. Āmīn.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 94-95]

I have been commanded to nurture the moral qualities of people. Since all this endeavour possesses a Messianic character, God Almighty has named me the Promised Messiah. Having proclaimed this, I re-

alize that the Christians would also oppose me. But how can I be afraid of opposition when I have been commissioned by God! If I had forged this claim, even slight opposition would have vanquished me. But I have not put forward this claim on my own. I am ready to explain my claim to any right-minded person and to use all lawful and recognized means to satisfy him. I speak the truth that this is the age in which Muslims, according to their belief, and Christians, according to their ideology, were waiting for someone to come. This is the promised time. He who had to come has come, whether anyone accepts him or not. God Almighty always manifests mighty signs in support of those whom He sends to the world. He inclines the hearts so that they should accept him. Whatever had been Divinely determined in respect of the Promised Messiah has come to pass. Whether anyone believes or not, the Promised Messiah has arrived, and I am he.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 285]

I have no wish to be worshipped as an idol. I desire only the Glory of God, Who has commissioned me. He who looks upon me with disrespect dishonours God Who has appointed me. He who accepts me, accepts God Who has sent me. Nothing can be better for a person than to tread the path of righteousness, and not to hasten to deny him who claims to have been appointed by God for the revival of the faith at the turn of the century. A righteous person can understand that at the turn of the fourteenth century, in

which thousands of objections have been raised against Islam from all sides, a Reformer was needed to prove the truth of Islam. This Reformer has been named Messiah, Son of Mary, because he has come to break the cross. God desires that as in the ancient days He delivered the Messiah^{as} from the cross of the Jews, He should now deliver him from the cross of the Christians as well. As the Christians have been guilty of great imposture in deifying a human being, the honour of God demanded that one bearing the name of Messiah should be appointed to demolish this imposture. This is God's doing though it appears strange to the eyes of these people.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, pp. 320-321]

Denial amounts to disobedience of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

As I am the Promised Messiah and God has openly manifested heavenly signs in my support, everyone who in, the estimation of God, has been sufficiently warned regarding my advent as the Promised Messiah and has become aware of my claim will be accountable to God, for no one can turn away with impunity from those who have been sent by Him. This sin is not against me but against the Holy Prophet^{sa} for whose support I have been sent. He who does not accept me, disobeys not me but him^{sa} who had prophesied my coming.

I hold the same belief with regard to believing in the Holy Prophet^{sa} as well. He who has heard the call of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and has been made aware of his

advent and who, in the estimation of God, has been sufficiently apprised of his Prophethood, if such a one dies a disbeliever he would be condemned to eternal perdition.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol.22, pp. 184-185]

In *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, God Almighty has named me 'Īsā, and has told me that He and His Messenger^{sa} had prophesied my advent. But as a body of Muslims was firmly of the faith—and I too believed—that Jesus^{as} would descend from heaven, I was not inclined to construe God's revelation literally but interpreted it differently and continued in the belief which I shared with the common Muslims and even set it forth in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*. Thereafter, Divine revelations descended upon me like torrential rain, affirming that I am the Promised Messiah who was to come. At the same time hundreds of signs appeared, and both heaven and earth rose to affirm my truthfulness. The bright signs of God compelled me to believe that I am the Messiah that was to come in the latter days. This was despite the fact that my earlier belief was that which I had set down in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*. Not relying entirely upon the revelation that was vouchsafed to me, I sought adjudication from the Holy Qur'ān and I was convinced by several conclusive verses that Jesus son of Mary^{as} had indeed died, and that the last *Khalīfah* would appear from among the Muslims under the title of the Promised Messiah. As there is no darkness left after the dawn of day, in the same way,

hundreds of signs, heavenly testimonies, several conclusive verses of the Holy Qur'ān, and a number of clear and categorical Aḥādīth compelled me to believe that I am the Promised Messiah. I had no desire for such a thing and it was enough for me that God should be pleased with me. I led a life of seclusion and no one was aware of my existence, nor did I desire that people should recognize me, but it was God Who pulled me out of my solitude. I had wished to live and die in seclusion, but He decreed that He would make me known with honour throughout the world. If you want to know, then ask God why He did so. I have no say in the matter.

Similarly, in the beginning I believed that I bore no resemblance to the Messiah, Son of Mary^{as}. He was a Prophet and one of the distinguished men of God. Therefore, whenever something in my revelation appeared to exalt me above him, I interpreted it as partial exaltation. But in due course, Divine revelation, which descended upon me like plentiful rain, did not permit me to continue in this belief and the title of 'Prophet' was clearly bestowed upon me, albeit with the proviso that I was a Prophet in one aspect, and follower of a Prophet in another. The instances of Divine revelation that I have cited in this book also reveal what God Almighty says concerning me vis-à-vis Jesus son of Mary^{as}. How can I reject the continuous revelations that I have received in the course of twenty-three years? I believe in those holy revelations as I believe in all the Divine

Revelations that have preceded me. I also understand that Jesus son of Mary^{as} was the last *Khalīfah* of Moses^{as} and I am the last *Khalīfah* of the Prophet^{sa}, who is the Best of Messengers. Therefore, God willed that, compared to Jesus^{as}, I should not be deficient in any respect. I do realize that these words of mine will not be welcome to those whose love for Jesus borders on worship. However, I pay no heed to them. How can I reject the Divine command and revert to darkness from the light that has been granted to me. In short, I am not guilty of any contradiction. I only follow that which is revealed to me by Almighty God. Until I was enlightened by Him, I continued to assert what I had said in the beginning. But when God bestowed knowledge upon me, I said to the contrary. I am a human being and do not claim to know that which is hidden. This is the fact, whether anyone accepts it or not. I do not know why God did so, but I know this much that God's jealousy is deeply aroused in heaven against the Christians. They have reviled the Holy Prophet^{sa} in a manner which would well-nigh rend the heavens asunder. In this manner, God reveals that the lowly servants of that Messenger^{sa} are more exalted than the Israelite Messiah son of Mary. He who is provoked and angered by these words may die in his anger but God has done as He willed and He always does what He wills. What power does a man have to object as to why God did so?

I swear by Him in Whose hand is my life that if Jesus son of Mary^{as} had been present in my time he could never have done that which I can do, and never could he have shown greater signs than those shown by me, and he would have found me a greater recipient of Divine grace than himself. Now, when this is my status, just think what would be the status of the Holy Messenger^{sa} whose servant I am!

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ²⁵

[Kashti-e-Nūh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, p. 60]

The secret of my appearance in the name of Jesus^{as} is as follows. At the time of such mischief by the Christians, God Almighty informed Jesus^{as} in heaven of the outrage which his people and his followers had created in the world. The soul of Jesus^{as} was greatly perturbed on finding the beliefs of his followers utterly corrupted, and he desired that someone should descend to earth as a fulfilment of his objectives. Then God Almighty, in accordance with His promise, caused the spirit and eagerness of the Messiah to be manifested in a suitable individual, and it is in this manner that the Messiah descended from heaven, just as Prophet Elias^{as} had descended in the form of John the Baptist^{as}.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 268-269, footnote]

As that Prince Prophet^{as} came into the world helpless and meek, and set an example of humility and gen-

²⁵ That is Allāh's grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases.—Al-Mā'idah, 5:55 [Publisher]

tleness, so God desired in this age to raise me—who also descended from a family of rulers and chiefs, and whose circumstances resemble those of the Prince Prophet^{as}—among the people who have wandered far away from pure morals. God desired that like Jesus^{as} I too should pass my time in the world in humility and meekness. The Word of God had long prophesied that such a one should appear in the world and, for this reason, God named me the Promised Messiah, that is to say, one who resembles Jesus the Messiah^{as} in his moral qualities.

[Kashf-ul-Ghiṭā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, p. 192]

Blessed is he who has recognized me. Of all the paths that lead to God I am the last, and of all His lights I am the last. Unfortunate is one who departs from me, for without me all is darkness.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, p. 61]

I have been informed that—on account of my helplessness, humility, trust in God, sincerity, signs and heavenly light—my life is similar to that of the first life of the Messiah^{as}. My nature and the nature of the Messiah^{as} resemble greatly as if they were two parts of the same jewel or two fruits of the same tree. There is such a complete unity between us that the spiritual eye would have little to distinguish between us. Moreover, there is also an overt resemblance between us and that is that Jesus^{as} was the follower and a servant of the faith of a perfect and great Prophet, i.e., Moses^{as}, and his Gospel is a branch of the Torah, and this humble one is one of the lowly servants

of the great Prophet^{sa}, who was the Chief of Messengers and the Crown of all Prophets. If the other Messengers are *Hāmid*²⁶, he is *Aḥmad*²⁷, and if they are *Maḥmūd*²⁸ he is *Muḥammad*^{sa}.²⁹

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 593-594, sub-footnote 3]

Christians were proclaiming aloud that Jesus, on account of his nearness to God and on account of his high status, has no equal. Now God has proclaimed that He has created his parallel who is even better than him and is Ghulām Aḥmad, i.e., the servant of Aḥmad [the Holy Prophet^{sa}].

Life-giving is the cup of Aḥmad^{sa};
 What a dear name is the name Aḥmad^{sa}.
 There are hundreds of thousands of Prophets^{as};
 But, by God, the highest status is that of Aḥmad^{sa}.
 I have tasted of the fruit of the orchard of Aḥmad^{sa};
 My garden is the word of Aḥmad^{sa}.
 Talk no more of the son of Mary^{as}!
 Better than him is the servant of Aḥmad^{sa}.

These are no idle or poetic thoughts, but are facts. If your experience tells you that I do not enjoy greater Divine support than the Messiah son of Mary^{as}, then you can count me a liar. God has decreed so, not for my own sake, but for the sake of His Prophet^{sa}, who has been greatly wronged.

[Dāfe'-ul-Balā, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp. 240-241]

²⁶ He who praises Allāh. [Publisher]

²⁷ He who praises Allāh to the ultimate point. [Publisher]

²⁸ One deserving praise. [Publisher]

²⁹ One deserving the ultimate praise. [Publisher]

Significance of the Title ‘Mahdī’

The one who was to come was named Mahdī, to indicate that he would acquire the knowledge of the faith from God Himself, and would not acquire the knowledge of the Qur’ān or Ḥadīth from a teacher. I can state on oath that such is my case. No one can prove that I have had a single lesson of the Holy Qur’ān or Ḥadīth or Tafsīr from any human being or have been the pupil of any commentator of the Holy Qur’ān or scholar of Ḥadīth. This indeed is the status of Mahdī, which has been bestowed upon me on the pattern of the Prophethood of Muḥammad^{sa}. I have been taught the mysteries of the faith directly, without any intermediary.

[Ayyām-uṣ-Ṣulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 14, p. 394]

Comparison with the Miracles of Jesus^{as}

Question: The Messiah son of Mary^{as} proved through many miracles that he had been sent by God, what [miracles] have you got? Have you put forward any such proof? Have you brought any dead person to life or restored sight to one congenitally blind? Even if we were to suppose that you are the like of the Messiah^{as}, what benefit do we derive from your advent?

Answer: It is apparent from a study of the Gospels that, throughout his life, the Messiah^{as} himself remained the target of this same objection that he had shown no miracle. How could he be the Messiah when he did not bring back to life anyone who could

have related the conditions of the life after death and could have warned his heirs that he had come back from hell and that they should forthwith believe. Had the Messiah^{as} brought back the ancestors of the Jews to this life to bear witness to his truth, no one would have dared deny him. Prophets have certainly shown signs but the faithless ones could not perceive them. In the same way, this humble one has not come empty-handed. God Almighty has bestowed a great quantity of life-giving water to me for the purpose of reviving the dead. He who drinks of it will come to life. I proclaim that if the dead are not revived, and the blind do not begin to see, and the leprous are not cleansed through my words, then I have not come from God Almighty, Who in His Holy Word has said concerning me:

نبی ناصری کے نمونہ پر اگر دیکھا جائے تو معلوم ہوگا کہ وہ بندگانِ خدا کو بہت

صاف کر رہا ہے اس سے زیادہ کہ کبھی جسمانی بیماریوں کو صاف کیا گیا ہو۔³⁰

Be sure that the seed of spiritual life has been sown like a mustard seed and it will soon, very soon, appear in the form of a great tree. A person who thinks along material lines cherishes material things and sees great value in them, but he who has been given a share of spirituality seeks the spiritual life. The righteous servants of God Almighty do not come into the world to make an exhibition for the amuse-

³⁰ If he is viewed in contrast to the Prophet of Nazareth, it will be realized that he is carrying out a great cleansing of the creatures of God, considerably more than they were ever healed of physical ailments. [Publisher]

ment of people. Their true purpose is to draw people towards God and they are ultimately recognized through this very spiritual power. The light that endows them with the power to attract others may not be perceived by those who would try to test it and it may even lead them to stumble; still, that light by itself draws such people as are worthy of being drawn and thus reveals its miraculous effect.

The special friends of God are known by the following signs:

- (1) They are bestowed a pure love of the Divine which cannot be perceived by people of this world.
- (2) Their hearts are governed by a sort of fear, due to which their obedience takes the subtlest form, and they are afraid lest the Eternal Friend is displeased.
- (3) They are bestowed extraordinary steadfastness, the manifestation of which surprises the beholders.
- (4) When someone persecutes them and persists in so doing, he is suddenly subjected to the wrath of that Most Powerful One, Who is their Guardian.
- (5) When someone becomes their true friend, and devotes himself to them in full loyalty and sincerity, God Almighty draws such a one to Himself and bestows His special mercy on him.
- (6) In comparison with others, their prayers are accepted in such large numbers as can hardly be counted.

(7) Hidden mysteries are often revealed to them and they are informed in advance of that which is yet to come. Even though other believers also may experience true dreams and visions, the chosen ones exceed them all in this respect.

(8) God Almighty becomes their Custodian and treats them more mercifully than a parent would treat his children.

(9) When they are afflicted with a great calamity, they are treated in one of two ways: either they are delivered from it in an extraordinary manner or are bestowed such steadfastness as is full of pleasure, delight and eagerness.

(10) They are bestowed a high moral status wherein they are freed from all arrogance, pride, meanness, conceit, hypocrisy, envy, miserliness and narrow-mindedness. They are characterized by whole-hearted conviction and cheerfulness.

(11) Their trust in God is of a very high order and the fruits thereof continue to be manifested constantly.

(12) They are given the power and the capacity to perform righteous deeds which others are unable to perform.

(13) They develop a high degree of sympathy for God's creatures without the expectation of any reward or merit. They are inspired by a high degree of desire to serve mankind. They themselves cannot

understand why they are so inspired, for this characteristic is a part of their nature.

(14) They are wholly and perfectly devoted to God Almighty and possess a fervent desire to sacrifice their whole beings in His cause. The special relationship their souls have with the Spirit of God cannot be described in words. They enjoy a standing with the Holy One which is not recognized by the common people. That which they specially possess in abundance and which is the fountainhead of all blessings; and by virtue of which—while they appearing to be sinking—they win through to security; and having arrived at the brink of extinction, are revived; and even though they are humiliated, they still exhibit their crown of honour; and though appearing alone and abandoned, they are suddenly seen at the head of a large group; is none other than this relationship of perfect devotion which can neither be severed with the sword nor loosened by any riot or fear of the world.

السلام عليهم من الله و ملائكته و من الصالحاء اجمعين³¹

(15) The fifteenth sign is their knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān. They are given deep understanding of the wisdom, verities and fine points of the Holy Qur'ān to a degree which is never given to others. They are the pure ones concerning whom God, the Glorious, says:

³¹ There is peace for them from Allāh and His angels and all the righteous. [Publisher]

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُونَ³²

(16) God Almighty inspires their words and writings with an effectiveness, which distinguishes them from the writings and speeches of the conventional clerics. Their words have an awe and grandeur and—provided there are no veils—it captures the hearts.

(17) They inspire a kind of awe which is a reflection of the awe inspired by God, for God Almighty grants them His company in a special manner. Their countenances reflect the light of God's love. He who perceives it is delivered from the fire of hell. Although they may fall into error or minor sin, there is a fire in their hearts that consumes all error and all sin. Their error does not persist, but is like something which is carried away by a strong current of water. Thus their critic always stumbles.

(18) God Almighty does not let them be destroyed and they are not subjected to humiliation and disgrace for they are dear to God as they are planted with His own hand. He does not cause them to fall from a height in order to destroy them, but He does so to exhibit their miraculous deliverance. He does not push them into fire in order to consume them, but to show the people that what was at one time a fire has now become a lovely garden.

(19) God Almighty does not let them die until that for which they have been sent has been accom-

³² Which none shall touch except those who are purified.—Al-Wāqī‘ah, 56:80 [Publisher]

plished. Their journey to the hereafter is deferred until they have found acceptance in the hearts of the pure.

(20) They leave behind a good remembrance, and God Almighty bestows special mercy on their progeny through many generations, as well as on the progeny of their faithful friends and keeps their names alive.

These are the characteristics of the Friends of the Gracious One. Each of these, when manifested at its due time, appears like a great miracle but its manifestation is entirely in the hand of God Almighty.

Now, in obedience to the direction:

وَأَمَّا بِنِعْمَةِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثْ³³

I do not see any harm in declaring that the Merciful God has, through His grace and bounty, bestowed all these characteristics on me in abundance. He has not sent me empty-handed, nor has He appointed me without any accompanying signs. He has bestowed all these signs upon me which are being manifested and will continue to be manifested. God Almighty will go on manifesting these signs until the truth is clearly established.

In answer to the question, ‘What benefit can we derive from your advent?’, I say that when a person who has been chosen appears from heaven, his advent benefits all and sundry according to their

³³ And proclaim the bounty of thy Lord.—Al-Ḍuḥā, 93:12 [Publisher]

capacities. His advent is, in fact, the rising of a spiritual sun, the light of which spreads far and wide. As the sun casts its effects differently on animals, plants minerals and other objects, though few people know enough about it, in the same way, the advent of an appointed one affects all dispositions and every part and region of the universe. From the moment his merciful appearance is determined upon in heaven, angels begin to descend therefrom, like the rays of the sun, unto the far corners of the world to strengthen those who have the capacity to advance towards the truth. Thereby, people of pious natures are by themselves inclined towards accepting the truth. All these are the signs of the truth of the Man of God at the time of whose advent heavenly abilities are sharpened. God has given this alone as a sign of true revelation that when it descends, angels too descend along with it and, day by day, the world begins to turn towards the truth. In addition to the particular signs that I have described above, this is a general sign of an appointed one who comes from God Almighty.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 334-339]

If my claim of being the Promised Messiah had involved elements which would have adversely affected the teaching and commandments of the Shariah, it would have been a terrible thing indeed. The question is, which of the Islamic realities have I changed by virtue of this claim? Which of the Islamic commandments have I in the least added to or

subtracted from? It is true that I have interpreted a prophecy in the sense which God Almighty conveyed to me at its own time. The Holy Qur'ān affirms the correctness of this interpretation and the true Aḥādīth also bear witness to it. I wonder what all this agitation is all about?

Proof of Truthfulness

Here, a seeker after truth can validly raise a question, namely, what evidence is there to support the claim of my being the Promised Messiah—for every claim requires some evidence, especially in these times when cunning, deceit and dishonesty have become widespread and false claims are being actively promoted.

In answer to this question, it would be enough for me to state that the following matters are sufficient as signs and evidence for a seeker after truth:

[1] First of all, there is the prophecy made by the Holy Prophet^{sa} which has consistently been interpreted to mean that, at the turn of each century, God Almighty shall raise a person to revive the faith by removing the weaknesses that might have crept in and would restore it to its true might and vitality. According to this prophecy, it was necessary that God Almighty should have raised a person at the turn of this fourteenth century who should have striven to reform the ills that have become current. Accordingly, I have been sent at the proper time. Previously, hundreds of saints have borne witness, on the basis of revelation, that the Reformer of the

fourteenth century would be none other than the Promised Messiah. Authentic Aḥādīth also confirm repeatedly that the Messiah would appear after the thirteenth century. Then, does not my claim at this point in time clearly conform with the time and the circumstances? Is it possible that the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sa} should turn out to be false? I have made it clear that if the Promised Messiah were not to appear at the turn of the fourteenth century, many of the prophecies of the Holy Prophet^{sa} would go unfulfilled and many saints, who were recipients of revelation, would turn out to be wrong.

[2] When the divines are asked, who else beside me has claimed to be the Reformer of the fourteenth century, and who else has announced his advent from God and claims to be the recipient of revelation and to have been commissioned by God, they have no answer and are unable to name anyone who has made such a claim....

[3] The third sign of the truth of my claim is that, as I have set out in the *Nishān-e-Āsmānī*, some men of God, who passed away many years before me, had given the news of my coming, specifying clearly my name and place of residence and my age.

[4] The fourth sign of the truth of my claim is that I have dispatched approximately twelve thousand letters and announcements to the representatives of other faiths, inviting them to a contest in the blessings of faith. There is perhaps not a single well-known clergyman in Europe, America and India who

has not been addressed by registered letter. They were all so over-awed by the truth that not one of them came forward. The criticism levelled against this invitation by the Maulavīs is in truth based on falsehood and filth. I have been given the glad tiding that if any opponent of Islam comes forward to challenge me, I shall prevail over him and he will be humiliated.....

[5] The fifth sign in support of my truth is that I have been informed that I shall ever remain triumph over all Muslims in the matter of vision and revelation. So let those of them who claim to be recipients of revelation come forward to compete with me. If they triumph over me in respect of Divine support and Heavenly grace and signs, I would submit to being slaughtered howsoever they wish.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 340-348]

I see that those who wish to be the followers of nature and the law of nature have been offered a good opportunity by God Almighty of accepting my claim, inasmuch as they are not confronted by the difficulties in which our other opponents are involved. They know well that Jesus^{as} has died and at the same time they have to confess that the prophecy contained in the Aḥādīth about the appearance of the Promised Messiah is among the long-established verities that cannot be denied by any reasonable person. Thus they are left with no other option but to accept that the Promised Messiah will be one of the Muslims. They are, however, entitled to inquire as to

why they should believe in me as the Promised Messiah, and on what grounds do I base this claim? The answer is that all the indications mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth with regard to the Promised Messiah have been combined in me and in my age and in my country; as, for instance, the age and the country and the town in which the Promised Messiah was to appear and the circumstances which called specially for his advent, and the earthly and heavenly occurrences which had been specified as indications of his advent, and the knowledge and learning that were to be his characteristic, have all been combined in me. In addition to these, and to provide further satisfaction, I have been strengthened by Heavenly support.

چوں مرا حکم از پے قوم مسیحی داده اند
 مصلحت را بن مریم نام من بنهاده اند
 آسماں بار دنشال الوقت می گوید زمیں
 ایں دو شاہد از پے تصدیق من استاده اند³⁴

To illustrate: The indication given in the text of the Holy Qur'ān proves that he Holy Prophet^{sa} appeared in the likeness of Moses^{as}, and that the chain of *Khilāfat* after the Holy Prophet^{sa} would be very similar to the chain of *Khilāfat* established after Moses^{as}.

³⁴ As I was invested with authority for the Christians, I was, therefore, named the Son of Mary. Heaven is showing signs and the earth proclaims that this is the time. These two witnesses stand firm in my support. [Publisher]

Just as Prophet Moses^{as} was promised that in the latter days—i.e., when the Prophethood of Banī Isrā'īl would reach its limit and Banī Isrā'īl would be divided into many sects, each contradicting the other, so much so that some would declare others to be infidels—God Almighty would raise a successor, i.e., Prophet Jesus^{as}, to support the faith of Moses^{as}; he would gather the scattered sheep of Israel, and bring sheep and wolves together at one place, and he would be an Arbiter for all the sects of Banī Isrā'īl, and he would iron out their differences and remove all rancour and ill-will; likewise, a similar promise was made by the Holy Qur'ān in the verse:

أَخْرَيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ^{ط 35}

Many details of this are set out in the Aḥādīth. For instance, it is mentioned that Muslims would become divided into as many sects as the Jews; they would contradict each other and brand each other as infidels; and would increase in hatred and enmity towards each other, till the time when the Promised Messiah would appear as an Arbiter. He would remove all rancour and hostility. During his time, the wolf and the sheep will be brought together. All historians are aware that, at the time of the advent of Jesus^{as}, the Israelite sects were ridden with dissension and labelled each other as heretics and infidels. I have also appeared at a time when inner dissension has multiplied and each sect has started calling oth-

³⁵ Others from among them who have not yet joined them.—Al-Jumu'ah, 62:4 [Publisher]

ers *Kāfir*. At such a time of dissension, the Muslims were in need of an Arbiter. God has, therefore, sent me as one.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 254-257, footnote]

My status is not that of an ordinary Maulavī, but my status is that of Prophets. **Accept me as one who has come from heaven**, and all the altercations and dissensions which have divided the Muslims will at once be resolved. Whatever meanings are attributed to the Holy Qur'ān by him—who has come as an Arbiter and as a commissioned one of God—will be its true meaning and whichever Ḥadīth he affirms as true will be a true Ḥadīth.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, pp. 140-141]

It is set out in an authentic Ḥadīth that he who fails to recognize the Imām of his age will die the death of ignorance.... This direction of the Holy Prophet^{sa} entails that every seeker after truth should continue to seek the true Imām.... The question arises: Who can be called the Imām of the age, and what are his characteristics, and in what respect is he to be preferred to other recipients of revelation and dreams and visions? The answer is that the Imām of the age is the person whose spiritual training is undertaken by God Almighty Himself Who invests his nature with such guiding light as enables him to overcome all philosophers and logicians of the world in every kind of debate. He refutes the subtlest criticism of every description so well by his God-given power, that one is compelled to admit that he has come into

the world equipped with all the resources needed for its reform and thus he was not to face humiliation before any opponent. He is the spiritual Commander-in-chief of the Muslim forces and God Almighty designs once again to make the faith victorious at his hand. All those who seek shelter under his banner are also equipped with the highest capacities. He is bestowed all that is needed for reform and is endowed with all knowledge that is required for repelling objections and setting forth Islamic excellences.

[*Darūrat-ul-Imam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, pp. 472-477]

It must be borne in mind that the expression 'Imām of the age' comprises the titles of Prophet, Messenger, *Muḥaddath* and *Mujaddid*. Those who are not Divinely appointed for the reform and guidance of mankind and are not invested with the requisite excellences cannot be described as Imāms of the age even if they are saints or *Abdāl*³⁶.

The question remains as to who is the Imām of this age who must, under Divine command, be obeyed by Muslims in general, the pious, the seers and the recipients of revelation. I have no hesitation in affirming that, by the grace of God, **I am this Imām of the age**. God Almighty has combined all the signs and conditions of the Imām in my person and has raised me at the turn of the century.

[*Darūrat-ul-Imam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 13, p. 495]

³⁶ Literally, "Those who have brought about a holy change". A term used by the Sufis for the higher grade of saints. [Publisher]

As I have come from God Almighty with truth and righteousness, you will find the signs of my truthfulness all around you. The time is not far—indeed it is very near—when you will observe angels descending from heaven in large numbers on the hearts of the people of Asia, Europe and America. You have learnt from the Holy Qur’ān that, with the advent of the vicegerent of God, the descent of angels is incumbent so that they should turn people’s hearts towards the truth. So wait for this sign. If angels do not descend and you do not perceive the clear effect of their descent in the world and you do not find the hearts inclined in an extraordinary manner to move towards the truth, then you may reasonably conclude that no one has descended from heaven. But if all this happens, then do not persist in denial, lest you be judged by God Almighty as a disobedient people.

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 3, pp. 13-14, footnote]

Titles of ‘Prophet’ and ‘Messenger’

Having already seen with my own eyes the clear fulfilment of a hundred and fifty or so prophecies that I received from God, how can I deny for myself the title of Prophet or Messenger? When God Almighty Himself has so named me, how can I reject these titles, and how can I fear anyone but Him? I swear by God—Who has sent me, and to attribute imposture to Whom is to be accursed—that He has sent me as the Promised Messiah. As I believe in the verses of the Holy Qur’ān, so do I believe, without the differ-

ence of a particle, in that clear Divine revelation which has been vouchsafed to me, and the truth of which has been established by His successive signs. I can stand in the *Baitullāh* and swear that the holy revelation which descends upon me is the word of the same God, Who sent His Word to Moses^{as}, to Jesus^{as} and to Muḥammad the Chosen One^{sa}. The earth bore witness in my support and so did the heaven. In this way, the heaven and the earth have affirmed that I am the Vicegerent of Allāh. But in keeping with the prophecies, it was inescapable that I too should be denied. Therefore, those whose hearts are in veils do not accept me. I know well that God will surely support me as He has always supported His Messengers. None can ever succeed against me.

[Eik Ghalaṭī Kā Izālāh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, p. 210]

Since I am a follower of the Prophet^{sa} who was invested with all human excellences and whose law was most perfect and complete in all its aspects and was designed to reform the whole world, therefore, I have been invested with all the capacities that are needed for the reform of the whole of mankind. There can be no doubt that Jesus^{as} was not invested with the natural capacity with which I have been invested, for he was sent only to one particular people. Had he been in my place, he could not, on account of his limited natural capacity, have done the work that God's bounty has enabled me to do.

وهذا تحديث نعمة الله ولا فخر³⁷

It is obvious that if Moses^{as} had appeared in the place of our Holy Prophet^{sa} he could not have achieved that which the Holy Prophet^{sa} did, and that if the Torah had been revealed in place of the Holy Qur'ān, it could never have accomplished that which the Holy Qur'ān did. The spiritual status of men lies behind the veil of the unknown. To become frustrated and annoyed with all this is of no avail. Is it beyond God, Who has created Jesus^{as}, to create another like him or even better than him? Show me if there is any verse in the Holy Qur'ān which stands in the way of this, and cursed be the person who denies a verse of the Holy Qur'ān. How can I say anything that is against the facts and is in contravention of the holy revelations which, for twenty-three years, have been comforting me and comprise thousands of Divine testimonies and extraordinary signs! Whatever God Almighty does is in accord with wisdom and is appropriate. He saw that a mere human being had been unreasonably deified and was being worshipped by four hundred million people; so He sent me at a time when this doctrine had been exaggerated to the extreme; and He named me after all the Prophets but singled out for me the name of the Messiah son of Mary^{as}, and thus bestowed upon me the mercy and favour which was not bestowed upon

³⁷ This is a proclamation of blessing of Allāh and not a matter of pride. [Publisher]

him, so that people should realize that grace rests with God; He bestows it upon whomsoever He wills. If I say all this on my own then I am a liar, but if God bears witness to my truth with His signs, then denying me would be contrary to righteousness.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 157-158]

I proclaim on the basis of Divine revelation that **I am the one who was to come**. Whoever wishes, can demand from me proof of my truthfulness according to the manner in which God Almighty has always proved the truthfulness of the Prophets^{as}.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 39]

I swear by Him in Whose hand is my life, that my God has honoured me with certain and absolute converse, and this is a daily occurrence. I find that the God Who was adjured by Jesus the Messiah^{as} in the words: “Why hast Thou forsaken me?” has not forsaken me. Like the Messiah^{as}, I too have been attacked many times, but my enemies have always been frustrated. A conspiracy was hatched to have me hanged but my God delivered me at the time of every trial, and I was not put on the cross like the Messiah^{as}. He has shown many great miracles in my support and has exhibited His mighty power to the same purpose. Through thousands of signs, He has proved to me that He is the same God Who revealed the Qur’ān and sent the Holy Prophet^{sa}. I do not see how Jesus, the Messiah^{as}, is to be preferred to me in any way. As God's word descended upon him, so it has descended upon me, and I do find myself blessed

with the same miracles as are attributed to him and even more so. All this honour has been bestowed upon me by following the Prophet^{sa} of whose rank and standing the world is unaware, that is, our lord and master Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}.

It is simply absurd the way ignorant and witless people say that Jesus^{as} is alive in heaven, whereas it is only in the Holy Prophet^{sa} that I find the signs of being alive. It is through him that we have seen the God Whom the world knows not, and the door of revelation that was shut upon all other peoples has been opened for us by the blessings of this Prophet^{sa} alone. We have seen through this Prophet^{sa} miracles which other people relate like myths and stories. We have found that the rank of this Prophet^{sa} cannot be exceeded. And we can only wonder why the world should be unaware of his status.

I have been asked why I claim to be the Promised Messiah. Let me tell you, in all truth, that through perfect obedience to this Prophet^{sa}, a person can be exalted above Jesus^{as}. The blind ones call this infidelity. I retort: How do you know what infidelity is when you yourselves are without faith! Infidelity is within you. You would not have been guilty of uttering such heresy had you known the meaning of the verse:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ³⁸

³⁸ Guide us along the straight path, the path of those upon whom Thou has bestowed Thy favours.—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

God promises that through perfect obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa} you can acquire all the various excellences of the Prophets^{as}, and you think that to acquire the excellences of just one Prophet is heresy!

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 353-355]

I swear in the name of God that as He spoke to Abraham^{as} and to Isaac^{as} and to Ishmael^{as} and to Jacob^{as} and to Joseph^{as} and to Moses^{as} and to Jesus son of Mary^{as} and, last of all, to our Holy Prophet^{sa} in such manner that He vouchsafed to him the most luminous and holy revelation, in the same way He has also honoured me with His converse. This honour has been bestowed upon me only on account of my obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Had I not been one of his followers and had I not obeyed him, I would never have been honoured with such Divine converse even if my good deeds had piled up as high as the mountains. All Prophethood has now come to an end except the Prophethood of Muḥammad^{sa}. No law-bearing Prophet can now come, but a non-law-bearing Prophet can come, provided he is a follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. In this way I am both a follower and a Prophet. My Prophethood—i.e., converse with God—is a reflection of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and nothing more. It is the same Prophethood of Muḥammad^{sa} that has manifested itself in me.

[Tajalliyāt-e-Ilāhiyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 411-412]

I have repeatedly affirmed that the revelation which I put forth is certainly and absolutely the word of

God, as the Holy Qur'ān and the Torah are the word of God, and I am a Prophet of God by way of reflection. Every Muslim is bound to obey me in religious matters, and is bound to accept me as the Promised Messiah. Everyone whom my call has reached and does not accept me as *Hakam*³⁹ and does not believe in me as the Promised Messiah and does not esteem the revelation that is vouchsafed to me as coming from God, is accountable in heaven—even if he is a Muslim—for he has rejected that which he had to accept at its time. I do not say merely that had I been an impostor I would have been destroyed, but I also affirm that I am true in my claim like Moses^{as}, Jesus^{as}, David^{as} and the Holy Prophet^{sa}. God has exhibited more than ten thousand signs in my support. The Holy Qur'ān bears witness for me and so does the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

[*Toḥfat-un-Nadwah*, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 95-96]

Triumph of Islam

Since the period of the Prophethood of the Holy Prophet^{sa} extends to the Day of Judgement and he is *Khātām-ul-A'nbiyā'*⁴⁰, God did not so design that mankind should be united in one faith during his lifetime, for this would have marked the end of his era, and one could be led to think that since the task that had been assigned to the Holy Prophet^{sa} had been completed, his Prophethood had also come to

³⁹ The Arbiter [Translator]

⁴⁰ Seal of Prophets [Publisher]

an end. God, therefore, left the unification of mankind and their acceptance of one faith for the latter part of the Prophethood of Muḥammad^{sa}, which will also be the time of the approach of the Day of Judgement. For this purpose God appointed a deputy from among this very Ummah, who was named the Promised Messiah and also *Khātām-ul-Khulafā'*. Thus the Holy Prophet^{sa} stands at the beginning of his Prophethood, and the Promised Messiah stands towards the end of it.

It was necessary that this world should not come to an end until after the appearance of the Deputy of the Prophet, as the unification of mankind was destined to take place in his time. This is set out in the verse:

هُوَ الَّذِي أَرْسَلَ رَسُولَهُ بِالْهُدَىٰ وَدِينِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهُ عَلَى الدِّينِ كُلِّهِ⁴¹

This means: He it is Who has sent His Messenger^{sa} with perfect guidance and the True Religion so that He may bring about its triumph over all the religions of the world...All scholars who have preceded me are agreed that this universal triumph would be achieved in the time of the Promised Messiah.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, pp. 90-91]

I swear by God, in Whose hands is my life, that it is He Who has sent me, and named me a Prophet, and called me the Promised Messiah, and manifested great signs in my support, the number of which extends to three hundred thousand.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, p. 503]

⁴¹ Al-Ṣaff, 61:10 [Publisher]

A Follower as well as a Prophet

God Almighty has repeatedly described me in His revelations both as a follower and as a Prophet. My heart is gratified with both these titles and I am most grateful that I have been honoured with this compound name.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 355]

I have been bestowed two titles by God Almighty. One of these is the title of a follower, as indicated by my name Ghulām Aḥmad. The second title given to me, by way of reflection, is that of Prophet, since God Almighty has named me Aḥmad in the earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* and addressed me repeatedly by that name. This was an indication that I am a Prophet by way of reflection. Thus, I am an *Ummatī* [follower of the Holy Prophet^{sa}] and also, by way of reflection, a Prophet. This is also indicated in the revelation set out in the earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*:

كَلَّ بَرَكَةً مِنْ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ فَتَبَارَكَ مِنْ عِلْمٍ وَتَعَلَّمَ

That is, every blessing is from the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and blessed is he who taught—the Holy Prophet^{sa}—and, thereafter, blessed is he who was taught—myself. Therefore, through perfect obedience, I was named a follower and having acquired the full reflection of Prophethood, I was named Prophet. Thus I acquired two titles.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 360]

Wherever I have denied being a Prophet or a Messenger, it has only meant that I have not brought a permanent and independent Shariah, nor am I a Prophet in my own right. But I am a Messenger and a Prophet without a new Shariah in the sense that—because of the inner grace that has been bestowed upon me on account of my obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and because I have received his name—God reveals the unseen to me. I have never denied being a Prophet in this sense, and it is only in this sense that God has called me Prophet and Messenger. Thus, even now I do not deny being a Prophet and a Messenger in this sense. When I say:

من نیستم رسول و نیاورده ام کتاب⁴²

I only mean that I am not the bearer of a new Shariah. It must, however, be remembered and never forgotten that, despite my having been called Prophet and Messenger, I have been informed by God that all this grace is not bestowed directly upon me but there is a holy one in heaven, i.e., Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}, whose spiritual grace accompanies me. Because of this intermediary link and having been named Muḥammad and Aḥmad, I am both a Messenger and a Prophet—one who is sent by God and one to whom God discloses news of the unseen. In this manner, the Seal of Prophethood has been fully safeguarded, for I have only been given this name by way of reflection through the

⁴² I am not a Messenger and have not brought a book. [Publisher]

mirror of love. If a person is chagrined over this revelation in which God Almighty has called me Prophet and Messenger, it is foolish on his part, for my being Prophet and Messenger does not break the Divine seal.

[Eik Ghalaṭī Kā Izālah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp. 210-211]

Twenty-six years ago, I was named Muḥammad and Aḥmad in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* and designated a spiritual reflection of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. This is why in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* people were told:

قل ان كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعوني يحببكم الله⁴³

And it was also said:

كلّ بركة من محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم فتبارك من علم و تعلم⁴⁴

If someone asks, how is it to be determined whether the Ḥadīth

لو كان الايمان معلّقاً بالشرّيٰ لنالہ رجلٌ من فارس⁴⁵

refers to me, and why it might not have reference to someone else from among the Muslims, the answer is that, in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, Divine revelation has repeatedly pronounced me as the person referred to in this Ḥadīth, and I call God Almighty to witness that this is the word of God Almighty that descended upon me.

⁴³ If you love Allāh, then follow me, Allāh will love you. [Publisher]

⁴⁴ Every blessing is from Muḥammad^{sa}, and thus blessed is he who taught and he who was taught. [Publisher]

⁴⁵ Had faith ascended to the Pleiades, a man from among the Persians would have brought it down. [Publisher]

و من ينكر به فاليارز للمباهلة و لعنة الله على

من كذب الحق او افترى على حضرة العزة⁴⁶

No one else from among the Muslims has ever made this claim that God Almighty has so named him and that he alone is entitled to make this claim on the basis of Divine revelation. To charge me with having claimed to be a Prophet on my own is the height of folly and ignorance and is utterly opposed to the truth. O' ignorant people, my claim to Prophethood does not mean that, God forbid, I claim to be a Prophet as against the Holy Prophet^{sa}, or that I claim to have brought a new Shariah. My Prophethood means the frequent experience of Divine converse and address that has been granted to me on account of my obedience to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. You people also admit the possibility of Divine converse, so our difference is only over the interpretation of terms. What you regard as the Divine converse, I, in obedience to the God's commandment, denote its frequency as Prophethood.

و لكل ان يصطلح⁴⁷

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp.502-503]

⁴⁶ He who denies this should be ready to come forth for *Mubāhalah* and may the curse of Allāh overtake him who denies the truth or manufactures a lie against the Lord of Honour. [Publisher]

⁴⁷ 'Everyone is entitled to adopt an expression.' [Translator]

وَإِنِّي عَلَى مَقَامِ الْخَتَمِ مِنَ الْوِلَايَةِ - كَمَا كَانَ سَيِّدِي
 الْمُصْطَفَى عَلَى مَقَامِ الْخَتَمِ مِنَ النَّبُوَّةِ - وَإِنَّهُ خَاتَمُ الْأَنْبِيَاءِ -
 وَأَنَا خَاتَمُ الْأَوْلِيَاءِ - لَا وَلِيَ بَعْدِي - إِلَّا الَّذِي هُوَ مِنِّي وَ
 عَلَى عَهْدِي - وَإِنِّي أُرْسِلْتُ مِنْ رَبِّي بِكُلِّ قُوَّةٍ وَبَرَكَهٍ وَ
 عِزَّةٍ - وَإِنَّ قَدَمِي هَذِهِ عَلَى مَنَارَةٍ خُتِمَ عَلَيْهَا كُلُّ رَفْعَةٍ⁴⁸

[Khuṭbah Ilhāmīyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 16, pp.69-70]

I am the one whose advent had been promised by God. Yes, I am the one whose advent had been foretold by all the Prophets^{as}.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p. 65]

Names of Other Prophets

God Almighty has not only named me 'Īsā, but has bestowed upon me the names of all the Prophets^{as}, from the beginning to the end. Hence, in earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, God named me Adam, as He said:

أَرَدْتُ أَنْ اسْتَخْلِفَ فَخَلَقْتُ آدَمَ⁴⁹

....In the same way, in the earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, He also called me Noah^{as} and said with

⁴⁸ I am at the ultimate point in sainthood as my lord and master, the Chosen One^{sa}, is at the ultimate point in Prophethood. He is the Seal of the Prophets^{sa} and I am the Seal of the *Auliya'*. There will be no *Walī* after me except one who is from me and is committed to me. I have been sent by my Lord with every power and blessing and honour and my foot is planted upon a tower where all exaltations come to perfection. [Translator]

⁴⁹ I desired to appoint a vicegerent; therefore, I created Adam. [Publisher]

regard to me:

و لا تخاطبنى فى الذين ظلموا انهم مغرقون⁵⁰

.....He also commanded me:

اصنع الفلك باعيننا ووحينا ان الذين

يباعونك انما يبايعون الله يد الله فوق ايديهم⁵¹

.....In the same way, in earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, I was named Abraham, as it was said:

سلام عليك يا ابراهيم

meaning, peace be on thee, O Abraham. God Almighty had greatly blessed Abraham^{as} and he was always safeguarded against the onslaughts of the enemy. By naming me Abraham, God Almighty indicates that this Abraham will similarly be blessed and his opponents will not be able to harm him.....In the same way, in earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, I was named Joseph.....Similarly, in earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* I was named Moses, as God Almighty said:

تلطف بالناس و ترحم عليهم انت فيهم

بمنزلة موسى و اصبر على ما يقولون⁵²

⁵⁰ And address me not concerning those who have gone astray; they shall be drowned. [Publisher]

⁵¹ Build the ark according to Our instructions and before Our eyes; those who enter into a covenant with thee, enter into a covenant with Allāh. His hand is above their hands. [Publisher]

⁵² Be kind and gentle towards the people and have mercy on them. You are among them in the position of Moses^{as}, and be steadfast against that which they allege. [Publisher]

In the same way, in earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, God named me David and Solomon, upon which I will later elaborate. In the earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, God also named me Aḥmad and Muḥammad, which is an indication that as the Holy Prophet^{sa} is the Seal of Prophethood, in the same way, this humble one is the Seal of *Wilāyat*. And finally God described me in the earlier parts of *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* as,

جرى الله فى حلال الانبياء

which means, ‘The Messenger of God in the mantle of all the past Prophets^{as}.’

This revelation means that I have been bestowed a portion of the particular circumstances or attributes of all the Prophets from Adam onwards—may peace be on them—who have come into the world from God Almighty, whether they are from among the Israelites or otherwise. There has not been a single Prophet of whose characteristics or circumstances I have not partaken to a degree. My nature bears the imprint of the nature of every Prophet. This is what God has told me.....

In this age, God willed to illustrate in one person the examples of all the holy and righteous Prophets^{as} who have passed, and I am that person....

God Almighty has also named me Dhul-Qarnain, for in His holy revelation He has called me:

جرى الله فى حلال الانبياء

which means, ‘The Messenger of God in the mantles of all the Prophets^{as}.’ This requires that I should also have the characteristics of Dhul-Qarnain as *Sūrah Al-Kahf* shows that he too was a recipient of revelation.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 112-118]

God, Who accomplishes everything gradually, first of all designated me as Jesus son of Mary^{as} for this age, for it was necessary that in my early days I should be persecuted like the Son of Mary^{as} and should be called *kāfir* and accursed and *Dajjāl* and that I should be dragged into courts. Thus to be the son of Mary was my first stage. But in the records of God, I am not named only Jesus son of Mary^{as} but I also have other names which God Almighty made me write twenty-six years ago in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*. There has been no Prophet in the world whose name has not been bestowed upon me. As God said in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, I am Adam^{as}, I am Noah^{as}, I am Abraham^{as}, I am Isaac^{as}, I am Jacob^{as}, I am Ishmael^{as}, I am Moses^{as}, I am David^{as}, I am Jesus son of Mary^{as}, and I am Muḥammad^{sa} by way of reflection. Since God bestowed in that book all these names on me and called me:

جرى الله في حلل الانبياء

i.e., the Messenger of God in the mantles of all the Prophets^{as}, it, therefore, follows that I should manifest the grandeur of each Prophet and some attributes of each Prophet should be exhibited in me.

But God desired that first of all He should exhibit the attributes of the Son of Mary^{as} through me. Thus, I experienced all the persecution from my own people and from others, just as the Son of Mary^{as} had experienced it at the hands of the Jews. In spite of all this, God was pleased to retain for me the title of the Messiah^{as} for the purpose of breaking the cross; so that the cross which had broken and wounded the Messiah should at one time be broken by the Messiah—with heavenly signs, not with human hands—for the Prophets of God cannot be left in a state of subjugation. Thus, in the twentieth century of the Christian era, God designed that the cross should be vanquished at the hands of the Messiah. But as I have just stated, I have been given other names also, and the name of every Prophet has been bestowed upon me. I have also been given the name of Krishnā, who appeared as a Prophet in India, and who is also called *Ruddar Gaupāl* [the annihilator and the nourisher]. Thus, I am the Krishnā whose advent the Āryas are awaiting in this age. I do not make this claim on my own, but God Almighty has repeatedly disclosed to me that I am the Krishnā—King of the Āryas—who was to appear in the latter days.....The recognized pundits of the Ārya faith have also declared that this is the time of the advent of Krishnā the *Avatār* and they are waiting for him to appear in this age. They do not yet recognize me, but the time is approaching and is near, when they will recognize me, for God's

hand will demonstrate to them that I am the one who was to come.

[Ḥaḳīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 521-523]

On several occasions, God Almighty has informed me through visions that Krishnā, who appeared among the Āryas was a chosen one of God, and was one of the Prophets of his age. Indeed, the word *Avatār*, current among the Hindus, is in fact synonymous with the word Prophet. There is a prophecy in the Hindū scriptures that an *Avatār* will appear in the latter days who will possess the qualities of Krishnā and will be his *Burūz* [re-advent by way of reflection]. It has been disclosed to me that I am that person. Krishnā has two qualities: First, he is *Ruddar*, the slayer of wild beasts and swine—with reason and heavenly signs; Secondly, he is *Gaupāl*, or nourisher of cows, that is to say, a helper of the pious with his spiritual breath. Both these are characteristics of the Promised Messiah and both these have been bestowed upon me by God Almighty.

[Toḥfah-e-Golarhviyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, p. 317, sub-footnote]

Just as I have come in the guise of Jesus son of Mary^{as}, for the cleansing of the sins with which the earth is replete, so have I also come in the guise of Raja Krishnā who was one of the great *Avatārs* of Hindū faith. I am indeed the very same, spiritually speaking. I do not say this out of my own imagination, rather it is the God of heaven and earth Who has disclosed to me, not once, but many times, that

for the Hindūs I am Krishnā and for Muslims and Christians I am the Promised Messiah.

[Lecture Siālkot, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p.228]

قد انبانى ربى اننى كسفينة نوح للخلق فمن

اتانى و دخل فى البيعة فقد نجا من الضيعة⁵³

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 486]

وإنى انا الخضر فى بعض صفاتى لا تحاط أسرارى⁵⁴

[Diary of Revelations, p. 39]

God, the All-Wise and All-Knowing, has divided the world into different and recurring periods, so ordained that some people resemble others; the good resemble the good and the bad resemble the bad, though this might remain hidden to some degree and may not be too obvious. But God has appointed for the latter days a resemblance to former times so that the Muslims should not lag behind other peoples in any respect. Thus he created me and made me resemble every past Prophet, so much so that I was named after all of them.

In *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, I have been given all these names: Adam^{as}, Abraham^{as}, Noah^{as}, Moses^{as}, David^{as}, Solomon^{as}, Joseph^{as}, John^{as}, 'Īsā^{as}, etc. In this manner, all past Prophets^{as} have, as it were, been raised again among the Muslims, and the Messiah

⁵³ My Lord has informed me that I am like the Ark of Noah for the people. He who comes to me and enters into the covenant with me will be delivered from ruin. [Publisher]

⁵⁴ I am Khiḏar in some of my qualities; my mysteries cannot be comprehended. [Publisher]

has been raised last of and my opponents have been named Christians, Jews and polytheists, as indicated in this verse of the Holy Qur'ān:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۚ
غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ۝⁵⁵

[Nuzūl-ul-Masīh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, p.382, footnote]

To deny me is not only my denial but is the denial of Allāh and His Messenger^{sa} for he who holds me to be a liar, first considers God to have lied—God forbid....Such a person will eventually have to reject the whole of the Qur'ān from first to last. Reflect then how serious a thing it is to deny me. I do not say it on my own, but swear in the name of God that he who rejects me and denies me may not reject the Qur'ān by word of mouth but he does so in effect and cuts himself off from God and the Holy Qur'ān.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, pp. 14-15]

The Holy Prophet's^{sa} Testimony through Visions

In contrast to the impure souls who persist in calling me *Kāfir*, there are many more who have had visions in which they beheld the Holy Prophet^{sa} and asked him regarding me. The Holy Prophet^{sa} told them that I am truly from God and am truthful in my claim.

⁵⁵ Guide us in the straight path—the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed *Thy* blessings, those who have not incurred *Thy* displeasure, and those who have not gone astray.—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:6-7 [Publisher]

We have with us the statements of many such people, which we can make available to anyone who is eager to follow this line of investigation.

[Anjām-e-Ātham, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 11, p. 343]

Knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān

I call God to witness, in Whose hand is my life, that I have been given excellence over every other individual in the matter of understanding the deeper and subtler meanings of the Holy Qur'ān. Had the opponent Maulavīs come forward to compete with me in this, as I had repeatedly invited them to do, they would have been humiliated by God. The understanding of the Qur'ān that has been bestowed upon me is a sign of Allāh, the Glorious, and I, by the grace of Allāh, believe that the world will soon recognize the truth of my claim.

[Sirāj-e-Munīr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, p. 41]

It is God's design that whoever out of the Muslims remains away from me will be cut off, be he a ruler or a subject.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, p. 416]

Acceptance Obligatory

God Almighty has disclosed to me that whoever has been apprised of my advent and does not accept me is not a Muslim and is accountable to God.

[Letters to Dr. 'Abdul Ḥakīm quoted in Al-Faḍl, vol. 22, no. 85, 15 March 1935, p. 8]

I am the garden of the Holy One. Whoever tries to cut me down shall himself be cut down. The face of my opponent shall be blackened and he who denies me shall be humiliated.

[Nishān-e-Āsmānī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 397]

I announce it plainly that it is not a trivial matter to denounce me. He who calls me a *kāfir* will have to become a *kāfir* first. He who describes me as faithless and misguided will have to confess his own error and humiliation. He who charges me with departing from the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth will have first departed from them himself, for I affirm the truthfulness of the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth and am in turn affirmed by them. I am not misguided but am the *Mahdī* [Guided One].

I am not a *kāfir* but ⁵⁶أَنَا أَوَّلُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ God has revealed to me that whatever I say is the truth. Whoever has faith in God and believes in the truth of the Holy Qur'ān and the Holy Prophet^{sa}, it should be enough for him to listen to me in silence. But what remedy is there for him who is impertinent and disrespectful! God Himself will admonish him. I, therefore, desire that for the sake of God you should reflect upon this matter and should advise your friends not to hasten to deny me but reflect honestly and impartially.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 16]

⁵⁶ I am the foremost of believers. [Publisher]

Divine Manifestations upon the Promised Messiah^{as}

On one occasion I saw in a vision that I created a new heaven and a new earth and then I said: ‘Let us now create man’. Thereupon the stupid Maulavīs raised a clamour that I had claimed to be God; whereas the meaning of this vision was that through me, God would bring about such a change as if heaven and earth have been renewed and true men have been created.

[Chashma-e-Masīhī, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 20, pp. 375-376, footnote]

The manner in which God Almighty is making Himself manifest by drawing near and is disclosing hundreds of the matters of the unseen to this humble one, it is hard to find its example in past ages. People will soon observe that God will manifest His countenance as if He was descending from heaven. He kept Himself hidden for a long time. He was denied and remained silent, but now He will not remain hidden and the world will witness instances of His power which their ancestors had never witnessed. This will come to pass because the earth has been corrupted and people have lost faith in the Creator of the heavens and the earth. People pay lip-service to Him, but their hearts are estranged from Him. That is why God has said He will create a new heaven and a new earth. This means that the earth is dead, that is to say, the hearts of the people of the earth have become so hardened as if they are dead, for the face of God has become hidden from them and all heavenly

signs that had been shown in the past have become like myths. So God has designed to create a new heaven and a new earth.

What is the new heaven? And what is the new earth? The new earth consists of the pure hearts that God is preparing with His own hand, which will be manifested by God and through whom God will be made manifest. The new heaven consists of the signs which are being manifested by His command at the hand of His servant. It is a pity that the world has become hostile to this new manifestation of God. They have nothing with them except ancient tales and their own fancies have become their god. Their hearts are benumbed, their resolves are weary, and their eyes are veiled.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, p. 7]

Favours of God upon the Promised Messiah^{as}

[1] God has bestowed upon me the deeper and subtler meanings of the Qur'ān.

[2] God has taught me the language of the Qur'ān in a miraculous manner.

[3] God accepts my prayers more than anyone else.

[4] God has granted me signs from heaven.

[5] God has vouchsafed to me signs from the earth.

[6] God has promised me that whoever challenges me shall be humbled.

[7] God has given me the glad tiding that my followers will always triumph through their reasoning in support of the truth, and that they and their progeny will be greatly honoured in the world, so that they may realize that he who comes from God is never in a loss.

[8] God has promised me that until the world comes to an end He will continue to manifest my blessings so much so that kings shall seek blessings from my garments.

[9] Twenty years ago, God gave me the glad tiding that I would be denied and that people would not accept me, but that He will accept me and manifest my truth with powerful assaults.

[10] God has promised me that for the purpose of once again manifesting the light of my blessings, a person will be raised from among your progeny into whom He will breathe the blessings of the Holy Spirit. He will be characterized by inner purity and will have a close holy relationship with God. He will be

مظهر الحق والعلاء⁵⁷

And it will seem as if God has descended from heaven.

و تلك عشرة كاملة⁵⁸

Look! The time is coming and is indeed near when God will spread the acceptance of this Jamā'at far

⁵⁷ A manifestation of the True and the High. [Translator]

⁵⁸ These are the ten perfect signs. [Publisher]

and wide. It will spread in the East and West, North and South, and Islam will become synonymous with this Jamā'at. These are not the words of man. This is a revelation from God for Whom nothing is impossible.

[Toḥfah-e-Golarhviyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 181-182]

I can recount from my personal experience that *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* is in fact a manifestation of Divine light. So many wonders are experienced in the recitation of this *Sūrah* that they demonstrate the high status of the Holy Word of God. Through the blessings of this blessed *Sūrah* and its continuous recitation, there took place such a disclosure of the unseen that I was apprised of a number of hidden matters before their occurrence; and its recitation at the time of any difficulty resulted in a wonderful lifting of the veil. I can recall having experienced approximately three thousand true visions and dreams that have so been fulfilled as clearly as the break of dawn. On more than two hundred occasions, I have experienced the acceptance of prayer at such critical moments that there appeared no way out of them. In the same way, through this *Sūrah*, I have experienced so many other wonders that if a Christian priest or a Hindu pundit were to experience even a slight reflection of them, he would at once cast off all his love of the world and would be ready to lay down his life to accept Islam. Similarly, some prophecies that have been disclosed to me through true revelations have been fulfilled within the

knowledge of my opponents and others are in the course of being fulfilled. There are so many such prophecies that their account would fill two volumes of the Gospels.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 642-645, footnote 11]

وَأَتَى أَنَا مَوْتَ الزُّورِ وَحَرَزْتُ الْمَذْعُورَ - وَأَنَا حُرِيَّةَ الْمَوْلَى
الرَّحْمَنِ - وَحُجَّةَ اللَّهِ الدِّيَانِ - وَأَنَا النَّهَارَ وَالشَّمْسَ وَالسَّبِيلَ -
وَفِي نَفْسِي تَحَقَّقَتِ الْإِقَاوِيلُ - وَبِي أَبْطَلْتُ الْإِبَاطِيلَ - وَأَنَا
الْوَاصِفَ وَالْمَوْصُوفَ - وَأَنَا سَاقَ اللَّهِ الْمَكْشُوفَ - وَأَنَا قَدَمَ
الرَّسُولِ الَّتِي تَحْشُرُ عَلَيْهَا الْأَمْوَاتُ - وَتُخَمِّي بِهَا الضَّلَالَاتُ -⁵⁹

[Lujjat-un-Nūr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 16, pp. 473-474]

God Almighty has given me so much self-control and has made my self so subservient [to Him] that if a person were to abuse me vilely face to face for a whole year, he himself would be ashamed in the end and would have to confess that he failed to shake my resolve.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 456]

⁵⁹ Verily I am the annihilator of falsehood and a citadel for the terror-stricken. And I am the instrument of my Lord, the Gracious, and the Argument of God, the Great Rewarder. I am the day and the sun and the way. In me the words have been fulfilled and lies have been laid bare. I praise, and have been praised in return. I am the symbol of Divine Might made manifest; I have come in the footsteps of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and through me the dead shall be raised and all darkness shall be dispelled. [Publisher]

I assure you that God has bestowed understanding of the Qur'ān upon me. Whenever He, glorified be His name, so wills He discloses certain Qur'ānic verities to me and makes manifest to me the true connotation of some verses together with the reasoning in its support and causes it to be established firmly in the heart like an iron nail. How then can I reject this Divine favour and how can I deny the grace that descends upon me like rain.

[Al Ḥaq, Mubāḥatha Ludhiāna, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 21]

ید بیضا کہ با او تابنده

باز با ذوالفقار می بینم

That is, on account of incontrovertible arguments, his bright hand flashes like a sword. Then I see him with the *Dhulfiqār*.⁶⁰

This means that there was a time when the *Dhulfiqār* was in the hand of 'Alī^{ra}, but God Almighty shall bestow it into the hand of this Imām in such a way that his shining hand will accomplish that which the *Dhulfiqār* accomplished in the early days. Thus his hand will be as the *Dhulfiqār* of 'Alī^{ra} that has been made manifest once again. This is an indication that the said Imām will be *Sultān-ul-Qalam*⁶¹ and his pen will do the work of *Dhulfiqār*. This prophecy is the exact rendering of the revelation vouchsafed to me, which was published in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah* ten years ago. It reads:

⁶⁰ The sword of Ḥaḍrat 'Alī^{ra}. [Publisher]

⁶¹ The King of the Pen. [Publisher]

کتاب الولی ذوالفقار علی

i.e., ‘The book of this saint is the *Dhulfiqār* of ‘Ali^{ra}.’ The reference here is to myself and, on this account, I have been called *Ghāzī*⁶² in many visions.

[Nishān-e-Āsmānī, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 4, p. 375]

If I had made a claim on my own, you would be free to reject me, but if God’s Holy Prophet^{sa} bears witness for me in his prophecies and my God Himself manifests His signs in my support, then do not wrong yourselves [by rejecting me]. Do not say that since you are Muslims you do not need to believe in any Messiah. I tell you truly that he who accepts me accepts him who prophesied about me thirteen hundred years ago and pointed out the time and age and the hallmarks of my mission. He who rejects me, rejects him who commanded that I be accepted.

[Ayyām-us-Ṣulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 14, pp. 328-329]

Promised one of Latter Days

Read the Aḥādīth and you will learn that the one who is to appear in the latter days—when the Quraish will have lost their sovereignty and the Muslims will be divided and distraught—will be a cultivator. God Almighty has informed me that I am that person. The Aḥādīth clearly state that in the latter days a supporter of the faith and of the Muslims will appear and that he will be a cultivator. The Holy

⁶² A steadfast participant in an Islamic war. [Publisher]

Prophet^{sa} has directed that every Muslim should accept him and should help him.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 303]

Blessings of Accepting the Promised Messiah^{as}

He who accepts me accepts afresh all the Prophets^{as} and their miracles, and he who does not accept me will lose his earlier faith also, for he possesses only tales and no personal experience. I reflect the image of God. He who comes to me and accepts me will see afresh the God concerning Whom other people have only tales to tell. I believe in the God Whom those who deny me do not recognize. I state truly that what they believe in are the idols of their imagination and not God. That is why those idols cannot help them, cannot give them any strength, cannot bring about a pure transformation in them, and cannot show them any supporting signs.

[Nūzūl-ul-Masīḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 18, pp. 462-463]

I am the light for this age of darkness. He who follows me will be saved from those pits and ditches which Satan has prepared for those who walk in darkness. God has sent me so that I should guide the world affably and peacefully towards the true God and that I should re-establish the moral conditions among the Muslims. For the satisfaction of the seekers after truth, He has bestowed heavenly signs upon me and has shown wonderful works in my support and has disclosed to me hidden matters and secrets of

the future, which, according to the holy books of God Almighty, are the true test of a parson's truthfulness, and God has bestowed holy knowledge and spiritual insight upon me. Consequently, the souls which do not cherish the truth and are content with darkness are hostile to me, but I desire to serve mankind with sympathy as far as it may be possible for me.

[Masīḥ Hindustān Mein, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol.15, p.13]

There are two types of people in the world. The first type are those who desire to claim for themselves virtue and laudable attributes without any justification whatsoever, as if they covet the very mantle of the Divine Majesty. They desire to wear the mantle of the Majesty of God Almighty. Such people are accursed.

The second type are those who disdain any kind of eulogy or praise. If they are left to themselves they would prefer to pass their lives in anonymity, but God Almighty, for His own designs and on account of His wisdom, praises and glorifies them. That is as it should be, for the rationale behind the appointment of those whom He commissions is to proclaim His own praise and glory in the world. Were He to say that so and so whom He has raised is useless, cowardly, without merit, mean, ignoble and devoid of all good qualities, then would any Divine attribute be manifested through such a person? God's setting forth of their glory, their high status and their good qualities is for the purpose of proclaiming His own glory and greatness. Such people are totally free of their egos and unmindful of praise or blame. That is

why many years ago, when I had no opponent, nor were there so many people with me, nor was I known in the world, God Almighty spoke about me in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, in the following terms:

يحمدك الله من عرشه . نحمدك ونصلي . كنتم خير امة اخرجت للناس
و افتخاراً للمؤمنين . يا احمد فاضت الرحمة على شفيتك انك باعيننا .
يرفع الله ذكرك ويتم نعمته عليك في الدنيا والاخرة . يا احمدى انت
مرادى ومعى غرست كرامتك بيدى . يا احمد يتم اسمك ولا يتم اسمى
بوركت يا احمد و كان ما بارك الله فيك حقاً فيك . شانك عجيب و
اجرك قريب . انى جاعلك للناس اماماً . انت وجيه فى حضرتى . اخترك
لنفسى . الارض والسماء معك كما هو معى و سرّك سرى . انت منى
بمنزلة توحيدى و تفريدى . سبحان الله تبارك و تعالى زاد مجدك . سلام
عليك جعلت مباركاً . و انى فضلتك على العالمين . ولقد كرّمنا بنى آدم و
فضّلنا بعضهم على بعض . دنى فتدلى فكان قاب قوسين او ادنى . وانّ
عليك رحمتى فى الدنيا والدين . والقيت عليك محبة منى ولتصنع على
عينى . يحمدك الله و يمشى اليك . خلق ادم فاكرمه جرى الله فى حلل
الانبياء . انت معى و انامعك . خلقت لك ليلاً و نهاراً . اعمل ما شئت قد
غفرت لك . انت منى بمنزلة لا يعلمها الخلق . ويعصمك الله ولو لم
اسمى الاعلى و انت منى بمنزلة توحيدى و تفريدى و انت منى بمنزلة
المحبوبين . عليك بركات و سلام . سلام قولاً من ربّ رحيم . مظهر الحى .
و انت منى مبدء الامر و ما ينطق عن الهوى ان هو الا و حى يوحى .
يعصمك الناس يعصمك الله . انت المسيح الذى لا يضاع وقته . كمثلك
63 درّ لا يضاع . انت الشيخ المسيح و انى معك و مع انصارك . و انت

⁶³ “Allāh praises thee from His Throne. We praise thee and call

In my own heart, I feel certain that all Prophets^{as} were by their nature averse to being praised, except what God Almighty Himself might pronounce in their favour. I call God Almighty to witness that

down blessings on thee. You are the best people who have been created for the service of mankind and as a matter of pride for the believers. O Aḥmad, mercy flows from thy lips. You are under Our care. God will raise thy name and will perfect His bounty unto thee in this world and in the hereafter. O My Aḥmad, you are My purpose and are with Me. I have planted your honour with My own hand. O Aḥmad, your name will come to an end, but My name will not come to an end. You have been blessed O Aḥmad, and the blessing that God has bestowed on thee was deserved by thee. You have a wonderful status and your reward is near. I shall make thee Imām of the people. You are honoured in My presence. I have chosen you for Myself. The earth and the heaven are with you as they are with Me and your secret is My secret. You are to Me like My Unity and My Uniqueness. Holy is Allāh, Blessed and High, Who has augmented your honour. Peace be on you. You have been blessed. I have exalted you over all the people of your time. We have honoured the progeny of Adam^{as} and have exalted some of them above others. He approached near to Us and then descended towards mankind and it became, as it were, a case of two bows with one string. My mercy covers thee in this world and the next. I have poured My love upon you, so that you are nurtured under My care. Allāh praises you and walks towards you. He created Adam^{as} and honoured him. The Champion of Allāh in the mantles of the Prophets^{as}. You are with Me and I am with you. For you I have created the night and the day. Do as you wish, I have forgiven you. You have a standing with me of which people have no knowledge. Allāh will protect you, even if people should not protect you. You are the Messiah whose time will not be wasted. A pearl like you is never wasted. You are the honoured Messiah and I am with you and with your helpers. You are My high name and you are to Me like My Unity and My Uniqueness and you are to Me like those whom I love. On you are blessings and peace. Peace is the word from the Merciful Lord. You are the manifestation of the Ever-Living. You are from me like a new beginning. He does not speak out of his own desire, it is a revelation vouchsafed to him.” [Translator]

what I have set out above are His words and not mine. This is because the honour and glory of God Almighty and the honour and greatness and glory of Muḥammad^{sa}, the Messenger of Allāh, have been rubbed into dust, and [the status of] Jesus^{as} and Ḥus-sain^{ra} has been so exaggerated and magnified that the Throne of God is atremble [with rage].

Now when billions of people have gone astray through their praise and glorification of Jesus^{as}, and countless have been ruined due to exaggerated praise of Ḥussain^{ra}, God's wisdom and honour now demands that they should be deprived of all those robes of honour in which they had been improperly clad and that these should be restored to God Almighty and to Muḥammad^{sa}, the Messenger of Allāh.

The use of these phrases with regard to me is for the purpose of manifesting the honour of God Almighty Himself, as well as the greatness of the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

I state on oath that my heart is inspired by real and true eagerness that all praise and glorification and all excellent qualities should be attributed to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. All my joy and the true purpose of my advent is that the Unity of God Almighty and the honour of the Holy Prophet^{sa} should be firmly established in the world. I fully realize that all terms of praise and glorification that God Almighty has employed for me are in fact meant for the Holy Prophet^{sa} because I am his servant and all my light is acquired from his torch of Prophethood and I have

nothing that is solely my own. For this reason I believe firmly that if after the Holy Prophet^{sa} someone claims to be an appointed one in his own right and to have a direct relationship with God Almighty without the benefit of the grace of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, such a person is rejected by God and in disgrace. God Almighty has proclaimed once and for all that no one can enter through the door that leads to God except by following the Holy Prophet^{sa}.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, pp. 284-287]

I, the claimant of both these dignities, have been among you for twenty-five years. Who then are you waiting for beside me? All these signs refer to the one who is present at the time of their manifestation, and not to someone of whom there is no trace in the world. It is a case of strange hard-heartedness. I simply fail to understand why people still await someone else when my claim has been affirmed by all the relevant signs and all opposition against me has been frustrated! It is true that I have not descended physically from heaven, nor have I come into the world to fight and cause bloodshed, but I have come for peace and am from God. I prophesy that after me and till the end of days, no Mahdī will ever appear from God who will create disturbance in the world through war and bloodshed, nor will there be any Messiah who will descend physically from heaven. You had better bid farewell to both these notions. These are vain desires which the people of this generation will carry with them to the grave. No

Messiah will descend and no blood-thirsty Mahdī will appear. He who was to come has come, and I am that one fulfilling God's promise. He who does not accept me, fights God for having sent me.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, p. 520]

Why do you wonder if I have come as the Messiah; the breeze of the spring carry the fragrance of the Messiah.

There is great eagerness in heaven in support of the call of truth; Angels are descending upon the well disposed.

The independent thinkers of Europe are turning in this direction; the pulse of the spiritually dead has begun to beat suddenly.

The wise are saying goodbye to the Trinity; they are devoting themselves to the Fountain of *Tauḥīd*.

An elegant flower has blossomed in the garden of the Ummah; An intoxicating fragrance is flowing from the garden.

I perceive the fragrance of my Joseph; and, though you might call me mad, for him I wait.

Listen to the voice of heaven, which proclaims: The Messiah has come, the Messiah has come;

Also listen to the earth which proclaims: The victorious Imām has arrived.

The heaven is showing signs and the earth says, This is the time; These two witnesses are desperately crying out for me.

It is now only in this garden that you will find rest and comfort; Hurry up, O’ you roaming in the wilderness, for there is time still!

This cool breeze has started blowing after a long interval; only God knows when these days and this spring will return.

People know nothing of the relationship that I have with my Beloved; He has become mine my life is all His.

At times I am Adam^{as}, at times I am Moses^{as} and at times Jacob^{as}. Also I am Abraham^{as}; and my progeny is countless.

I am a tree that bears David-like fruits; as I am David^{as}, so is Goliath my quarry.

Like Jesus^{as}, I would have been drawn upon the cross; had it not been for the name of Aḥmad^{sa} upon which I rely wholly.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 131-133]

I desire no domain, my domain is apart from all others; what have I to do with crowns, my crown is the pleasure of my Beloved.

I dwell in the sky, what concern have I with the earth; the dwellers of heaven have nothing to do with the earth.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 141]

The garden of Adam which was still unfinished is laden with fruit and leaves with my coming.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 144]

The treasures which had remained buried through centuries are now being distributed by me to those who seek them.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, p. 147]

Why do you hesitate to accept this Messiah, whose re-

semblance to the earlier Messiah has been vouched by God.

You bestow this title upon expert physicians and even call beauteous ones by this name.

[Tawḍīḥ-e-Marām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3 Title page]

It is Thy sheer grace and beneficence that Thou hast chosen me; Otherwise, there was no lack of servants in Thy entourage.

Those who claimed to be my friends have all become my enemies but Thou hast not abandoned me, O Thou Who fulfills all my needs.

O my Unique Friend, O Refuge of my soul, Thou art sufficient for me; I need no other beside Thee.

Had it not been for Thy grace, I would have died in frustration; Only God knows where my dust would have been thrown.

O God, may my body and my soul and my heart be spent in Thy cause; for I find no one else who loves as Thou dost love.

From the beginning, my time was passed under Thy care; I was nurtured in Thy lap like a suckling baby.

I have not seen in mankind the fidelity that Thou hast; there is no comforter like unto Thee.

People say that one without merit finds no acceptance, and yet I have been accepted though I am without merit.

I have been the recipient of Thy numberless favours and bounties which it would be difficult for me to count till the Day of Judgement.

What is my fault that I have received Thy command; who am I to reject the command of the Omnipotent Sovereign?

My duty now is to carry out the command that I have received; though in myself I am weak and feeble and sorrowful.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol.21, pp. 127-128]

3

THE PURPOSE OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH'S ADVENT

**“I firmly believe that whoso follows me with steadfastness
and sincerity of heart will not perish but will partake of the
life which is immortal.”**

All Prophets come for the same Purpose

The main purpose of the advent of Prophets^{as} in this world and the grand objective of their teaching and preaching is that mankind should recognize God Almighty and should be delivered from the life which leads to hell and ruin and which is known as the life of sin. In fact, this is the most important objective before them. Now that God Almighty has established a dispensation and has raised me, the same purpose which is common to all Prophets^{as} is also the purpose of my coming, namely, that I wish not only to tell the world what God is, but I actually want them to see Him, and to show them the way of desisting from sin.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, p.11]

Blessings of the Imām of the Age

Whenever the Imām of an age makes his appearance in the world, he is accompanied by thousands of lights. There is jubilation in heaven and people's good qualities are stimulated through the spread of spirituality and light. So, the one who possesses the capacity of receiving revelation, begins to receive revelation, and the one who has the capacity to gain understanding by reflecting upon matters of faith, his power of reflection and understanding is augmented, and the one inclined towards worship begins to find pleasure in worship and supplication, and the one who engages in discourse with the followers of other faiths, is be-

stowed the power of reasoning and carrying the arguments to a convincing conclusion. In fact, all this results from the diffusion of spirituality which descends from heaven with the Imām of the age and finds its way into every eager heart. This is a general phenomenon and a Divine practice to which the Holy Qur'ān and the authentic Aḥādīth guide us and which I have observed through my personal experiences. But the age of the Promised Messiah has a unique characteristic, which is that in the scriptures of earlier Prophets^{as} and in Aḥādīth it is recorded that at the time of advent of the Promised Messiah, the spread of spiritual light will reach a degree that women will also receive revelations, children will be able to prophesy and common people will speak with the power of the Holy Spirit. All this will be a reflection of the spirituality of the Promised Messiah.

When the light of the sun falls upon a wall, it is illuminated, and if it has been white-washed with lime it shines even more, and if it is studded with mirrors it reflects the light so strongly that the naked eye can hardly bear its reflection. But the wall cannot claim that the light is its own, for the light vanishes altogether after sunset. In the same manner, all the light of revelation is a reflection of the light of the Imām of the age.

Strengthening of the Faith

I have been sent to strengthen the faith and to prove the existence of God Almighty to the people, for their faith has become weak, and they take life after death no more seriously than a fable. The conduct of every person proclaims that he has not the faith and trust in God and in the hereafter as he has in the world and its ranks and its resources. Tongues profess a lot but the hearts are suffused with the love of the world. It is the same condition in which the Messiah^{as} had found the Jews. As a characteristic of the weakness of their faith, the moral condition of the Jews had deteriorated greatly, and love of God had become cold in their hearts. The same is true in my time. I have been sent so that truth and faith may be revived and righteousness may inspire the hearts. This is the purpose of my advent. I have been told that heaven will once more come near the earth after it had moved far away. These are the reforms that I have to bring about and these are the tasks for which I have been sent.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 291-294, footnote]

...I wish to state that God Almighty—having found this age full of darkness, and sunk deep in heedlessness, denial and paganism, and having observed the waning of faith, truthfulness, sincerity and righteousness—has sent me so that He may once again re-establish in the world the intellectual, physical, moral and spiritual verities, and to safeguard Islam against the onslaughts of those who design to harm this Di-

vine garden in the guise of philosophy, naturalism, innovation, polytheism and atheism.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, p. 251]

The task for which God has appointed me is that I should remove the malaise that afflicts the relationship between God and His creatures and restore the relationship of love and sincerity between them. Through the proclamation of truth and by putting an end to religious conflicts, I should bring about peace and manifest the Divine verities that have become hidden from the eyes of the world. I am called upon to demonstrate spirituality which lies buried under egoistic darkness. It is for me to demonstrate by practise, and not by words alone, the Divine powers which penetrate into a human being and are manifested through prayer or attention. Above all, it is my task to re-establish in people's hearts the eternal plant of the pure and shining Unity of God which is free from every impurity of polytheism, and which has now completely disappeared. All this will be accomplished, not through my power, but through the power of the Almighty God, Who is the God of heaven and earth.

[Lecture Lāhore, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p.180]

God has sent me into the world so that through gentleness, love, and kindness, I should draw towards God and His holy guidance people who have gone astray, and should enable them to tread the right path with the Divine light that has been bestowed upon

me. Man stands in need of such reasoning as would convince him that God does indeed exist, inasmuch as a great part of the world is being driven to ruin for lack of faith in the existence of God Almighty and in His revealed guidance. There is no clearer and easier way to believe in the existence of God than through the understanding that He reveals to His close servants matters of the unseen and prophecies regarding future events. He discloses to those who are close to Him the deep hidden secrets, because there is no way for man to be enlightened about such secrets of the future as are beyond the reach of human faculties. It is indeed true that knowledge of unseen events and hidden matters, especially those which are related to the exercise of Divine power and will, are matters that man can never attain through his own efforts. Therefore, God has bestowed His beneficence upon me and has chosen me out of the whole world so that, through the manifestation of His signs, He may bring back to the right path those who have gone astray. But God has observed from heaven that the helpers and followers of the Christian faith i.e. the Christian clergy, have wandered far from the truth, and have become a people who have not only lost the straight path themselves but they traverse thousands of miles of land and ocean and endeavour to convert others to their own doctrines. They do not know the true God, but their god is their own invention. Therefore, God's mercy for mankind demanded that He should rescue His creatures from their deception. He has, for this

reason, sent this Messiah so that through the right reasoning and argument he should break the cross that had broken and wounded the body of Jesus^{as}.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 143-144]

This humble one has been sent for the sole purpose of conveying to God's creatures that, of all the faiths present in the world, the true faith which is in accord with the Divine will is the one which has been brought by the Holy Qur'ān, and that the door that opens into the house of salvation is:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ⁶⁴

[Hujjatul-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 6, pp. 52-53]

Grand Design for the Victory of Islam⁶⁵

If you are honest, then be thankful and fall prostrate with gratitude that you have found the time which was awaited by your ancestors, and longing for which countless souls have passed on to the next life. It is for you now to value it and take advantage of it or to ignore it. I shall state it repeatedly and cannot restrain myself from announcing that I am the one who has been sent at the proper time for the reform of mankind so that faith might be re-established in the hearts of people.

⁶⁴ There is no one worthy of worship except Allāh, Muḥammad^{sa} is the Messenger of Allāh. [Translator]

⁶⁵ This section is a continuous narration in the original; sub-headings have been added by the Publisher. [Publisher]

Coming of the Promised Messiah^{as} for the Revival of Islam

I have been sent in the same way as he who was sent after Moses^{as}, and whose soul was raised to heaven having endured all kinds of trials in the reign of Herod. When the second *Kalīmullāh*⁶⁶, who in reality was the first and was the Chief of Prophets^{sa}, came for the annihilation of other Pharaohs, and it was said concerning him:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ
كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ۖ⁶⁷

he too, being the like of the first *Kalīmullāh* but of much higher rank, was promised a Messiah like the first Messiah. This Promised Messiah, having been bestowed the power and disposition and characteristics of the Messiah son of Mary^{as}, descended from heaven at a time which was like the time of the first Messiah and after more or less the same period of time as had separated the Messiah son of Mary^{as} from the first *Kalīmullāh*, i.e., in the fourteenth century. His was a spiritual descent like the descent of the perfect ones who, after their spiritual ascent, descend for the reform of God's creatures. He

⁶⁶ The title given to the Prophet Moses^{as}, literally meaning, 'One who converses with Allāh'. [Publisher]

⁶⁷ Verily, We have sent to you a Messenger, who is a witness over you, even as We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh.—Al-Muzzammil, 73:16 [Publisher]

descended at a time that resembled in all respects the time of the descent of Jesus son of Mary^{as} so that this should be sign for men of understanding. Everyone should take care not to hasten to deny him, lest he should be adjudged as fighting God Almighty. Worldly people with their blind adherence to old concepts will not accept him, but the time is fast coming when their mistake will be made manifest.

دنیا میں ایک نذیر آیا۔ پر دنیا نے اُسے قبول نہیں کیا۔ لیکن خدا اسے قبول کرے گا اور بڑے زور آور حملوں سے اس کی سچائی ظاہر کر دے گا۔⁶⁸

These are not the words of man but are the words of the Lord of Glory and the revelation of the God Almighty. I am sure that the days of these assaults are near, but they will not be carried out with sword or hatchet, nor will there be any need for guns and cannon. God's help will descend with spiritual armaments and a great battle will be waged against the Jews. Who are they? They are the people of this age who worship that which is overt and follow the Jews one and all. The Divine sword will cut them asunder and will wipe out their Jewish dispositions. Every concealer of truth, Antichrist, world worshipper and every one-eyed one who does not possess the eye of faith will be slaughtered with the sword of

⁶⁸ A Warner came into the world and the world did not accept him, but God will accept him and will establish his truth with powerful assaults. [Translator]

conclusive proof. Truth will be victorious and Islam will again enjoy the day of freshness and light which it had enjoyed before and the sun shall rise again in its full glory as it had risen before. But not just yet. It is necessary that heaven should keep it from rising until we have carried our endeavour and sacrifices to the extreme and given up all our comforts for the sake of its appearance and made ourselves ready to accept every humiliation for the glory of Islam.

Sacrifice Necessary for the Revival of Islam

The revival of Islam demands a sacrifice from us. What is that sacrifice? That sacrifice is our death in the cause of Islam. It is this death upon which depends the life of Islam, the life of the Muslims and the manifestation of the Living God. This is what in other words is called Islam and it is this Islam whose revival God Almighty now desires. It was necessary that for the consummation of this grand project, God Himself should bring into being a great scheme which should be effective in every way. The Wise and Mighty One has brought this about by deputing this humble one for the reform of mankind. And for the purpose of drawing the world towards truth and righteousness, He has divided into several branches the scheme for the support of the truth and the propagation of Islam.

Branches of the Scheme for the Propagation of Islam

One of these branches is the scheme of publications that has been given to this humble one. For this purpose, God has given me such deep knowledge and taught me such fine points of wisdom as cannot be acquired by man through his own efforts and can be learnt only through the power of God Almighty. The difficulties in my way are resolved not through any human effort but through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The second branch of this scheme is the system of announcements, which is operational under Divine behest for the purpose of furnishing conclusive proof. More than twenty thousand announcements have already been published for the purpose of presenting to the people conclusive proofs in support of Islam. This effort will continue as and when the need arises in future.

The third branch of this scheme is the system of visitors and seekers after truth and other visitors with diverse motives, who come to visit me upon hearing of this Divine scheme...

The fourth branch of this scheme consists of letters written to seekers after truth or to opponents. So far, more than ninety thousand such letters have been received and answered...Every month six to seven

hundred, and sometimes even a thousand, such letters are received and answered.

The fifth branch of this scheme, which God Almighty has established through His special revelation, is the system of Bai‘at, whereby people become members of this Jamā‘at. When God established this system, He commanded me:

زمین میں طوفانِ ضلالت برپا ہے۔ تو اس طوفان کے وقت میں یہ
کشتی تیار کر۔ جو شخص اس کشتی میں سوار ہوگا وہ غرق ہونے سے نجات
پا جائے گا۔ اور جو انکار میں رہیگا اس کے لئے موت درپیش ہے۔⁶⁹

He also said:

جو شخص تیرے ہاتھ میں ہاتھ دے گا اُس نے تیرے
ہاتھ میں نہیں بلکہ خدا تعالیٰ کے ہاتھ میں ہاتھ دیا۔⁷⁰

God Almighty has also given me the glad tiding:

میں تجھے وفات دوں گا اور اپنی طرف اٹھالوں گا مگر تیرے سچے متبعین اور
محبین قیامت کے دن تک رہیں گے اور ہمیشہ منکرین پر انہیں غلبہ رہے گا۔⁷¹

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 7-25]

⁶⁹ The world is adrift in a storm of error. Do thou prepare an Ark at this time of peril. He who boards this Ark will be delivered from drowning and he who rejects it will face death. [Translator]

⁷⁰ He who puts his hand in thy hand will have put his hand not into thy hand but into the hand of God. [Translator]

⁷¹ I shall cause thee to die and shall raise thee towards Me, but thy true and sincere followers and friends will continue till the Day of Judgement and will always prevail over those who deny thee. [Translator]

Heavenly Signs

Twenty years ago, I received this revelation:

قل جاء الحق و زهق الباطل ان الباطل كان زهوقًا - كل بركة
من محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم - فتبارك من علم و تعلم - قل ان
افتريته فعلى اجرامى - هو الذى ارسل رسوله بالهدى و دين
الحق ليظهره على الدين كله لا مبدل لكلمات الله - ظلموا و ان
الله على نصرهم لقدير - بخرام كه وقت تو نزديك رسيد و پائے محمد يان بر
منار بلند تر محكم افتاد - پاك محمد مصطفى نبیوں كا سردار - خدا تيرے سب كام
درست كر ديگا - اور تيرى سارى مرادیں تجھے ديگا - رب الافواج اس طرف
توجه كر ديگا - اس نشان كا مدعا يہ ہے كه قرآن شريف خدا كى كتاب اور ميرے
منہ كى باتیں ہیں - جناب الہی كے احسانات كا دروازہ كھلا ہے اور اس كى
پاك رحمتیں اس طرف متوجه ہیں - وہ دن آتے ہیں كه خدا تمہارى مدد
كر ديگا - وہ خدا جو ذوالجلال اور زمين اور آسمان كا پيدا كرنے والا ہے -⁷²

⁷² Proclaim, truth has arrived and falsehood has vanished, indeed falsehood is bound to vanish. Every blessing is from Muḥammad^{sa}, then blessed is he who taught and he who was taught. Say: If I have invented it myself, the sin of it is on me. He it is Who has sent His Messenger^{sa} with guidance and the religion of truth so that He might cause it to triumph over all other religions. There is no changing the words of Allāh. They have been wronged and Allāh surely has the power to help them. Step forth for thy time has drawn near and the feet of the Muslims have been planted on a high tower. Holy is Muḥammad, the Chosen One, Chief of the Prophets^{sa}. God will set right all thy affairs and will fulfil all thy desires. The Lord of hosts

All these revelations constituted a prophecy that through me God Almighty will establish the truth of Islam and the falsehood of all other faiths. That prophecy now stands fulfilled because no opponent has had the capacity or fortitude to prove the truth of his faith as against me. Heavenly signs are being displayed at my hand and the verities and deeper meanings of the Holy Qur'ān are being set forth through my pen. Arise and search everywhere in the world. Is there anyone from among the Christians or the Sikhs or the Jews or the followers of any other faith who can stand against me in exhibiting heavenly signs and in setting forth verities and learning? I am the one concerning whom this Ḥadīth is found in the authentic books of Ḥadīth that in his time all religious communities will be destroyed but Islam will shine brighter than it ever did in the intervening periods.

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 265-268]

By raising this humble servant in this age and bestowing upon me hundreds of heavenly signs and vouchsafing to me miraculous secrets and verities and furnishing me with hundreds of conclusive intellectual arguments, God Almighty has designed that the true teachings of the Holy Qur'ān should be published and made current among every people and in every

will attend to this. This sign means that the Holy Qur'ān is God's Book and is the word of His Mouth. The door of Divine bounties is open and His holy mercies are attending to this. The days are coming when God will help you, the God Who is the Lord of Glory and is the Creator of the heavens and earth. [Translator]

country, and that by so doing He may provide them with conclusive arguments. In order to fulfil this design and to lead the matter to its conclusion, God Almighty enabled me to annex to this book an announcement of an award of ten thousand rupees. And I set forth a heavenly sign with the testimony of my opponents and antagonists and invited all my opponents for a contest, so that not even the minutest aspect of carrying the matter to its conclusion is left unattended and every one of my opponents should himself become a witness to his own helplessness and defeat. In short, the resources for the propagation of the faith and the arguments and conclusive proofs which God Almighty has bestowed upon me by His grace and beneficence have not been bestowed upon anyone of the followers of earlier faiths, nor were all the intrinsic abilities, which have been vouchsafed to me in this regard, granted to any of them.

ذَلِكَ فَضْلُ اللَّهِ يُؤْتِيهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ⁷³

As God Almighty has distinguished me with special resources and has raised me in an age which is most conducive and helpful in carrying out the service of propagation to its completion, He has also given me the glad tidings, by His grace and beneficence, that from the beginning it had been destined that the spiritual fulfilment of the above quoted verse and also of the verse:

⁷³ That is Allāh's grace; He bestows it upon whomsoever He pleases.—Al-Mā'idah, 5:55 [Publisher]

وَاللَّهُ مُتِمُّ نُورِهِ⁷⁴

should take place through me. God Almighty will Himself convey to my opponents the reasons and arguments and everything that I have written for their benefit and will thus fulfil the meaning of this verse by exposing the frustration, confusion and defeat of my opponents.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 1, pp. 596-597, sub-footnote 3]

I am not here relating some old stories, but only that of which I have personal knowledge. I have found superlative power in the Holy Qur'ān and I have observed a wonderful quality that comes from complete devotion to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. No other religion possesses such power and such quality that can lead its sincere follower to the station of sainthood. God not only honours the true servant with His word but also shows him through His actions that He is the God Who has created heaven and earth, so much so that his faith transcends the far flung stars. I have personal experience in this regard. God talks to me and has shown more than a hundred thousand signs at my hands. Thus, though I honour all Prophets^{as} and their books, I believe that Islam alone is the living faith, for through it God has manifested Himself to me. Anyone who doubts this statement of mine should come over to investigate these things and stay with me for at least a period of two months. I shall be responsible for his expenses during his stay. A religion worth the name must

⁷⁴ But Allāh will perfect His light.—Al-Ṣaff, 61:9 [Publisher]

be a living religion which is able to exhibit God through living and fresh demonstration of His powers. A mere claim on behalf of a religion is vain and without basis.

[Chashma-e-Ma'rifat, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 23, p. 428]

The Status of the Messiah and Mahdī

Although I have explained in various books that my claim of being Jesus the Messiah, and Muḥammad the Mahdī, does not mean that I am actually the same person as Prophet Jesus^{as} or the Holy Prophet^{sa}, yet those who have not read my books with care might fall into the error that I have put forward this claim in the context of the transmigration of souls, and that I claim that the souls of these two holy Prophets^{as} have actually entered my body. This is far from the truth. The fact is that past Prophets^{as} had made a prophecy with regard to the latter days, according to which it would be a time when the world will be replete with two kinds of errors; one that will relate to the rights of the creatures and the other will relate to the rights of the Creator.

The wrong relating to the rights of creatures would be that blood of man will be shed under the pretence of Jihad, so much so that one who kills an innocent person would be under the illusion that by this shedding of blood he has acquired great merit. Many other injuries will be inflicted upon mankind through such fanaticism merely on the basis of religious honour...The second type of wrong, which concerns the

Creator, is the doctrine of modern day Christians which has reached the height of exaggeration. There is no doubt that Jesus^{as} was a great Prophet, and he certainly was the beloved and chosen one of God and was the light of the world and the sun of guidance and was close to God and has a station near to His Throne. Millions of people who love him sincerely and follow his guidance will be delivered from hell; yet, it is a great mistake and is sheer infidelity to deify him...The truth is that when spiritual and heavenly matters fall into the hands of the multitude they are unable to penetrate to their reality and thereby fall into grave error, partly through perversion and partly through literal interpretation of the metaphorical. Christian scholars of this age have fallen into this error and are trying by all possible means to deify Prophet Jesus^{as}. This amounts to usurping the rights of the Creator and...it was to establish this right and to establish the Unity of God in the hearts of people, that a great Prophet arose in Arabia, whose name was Muḥammad and Aḥmad, countless greetings of peace be bestowed upon him by Allāh. The Islamic law was divided into two parts, the greater part was:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ⁷⁵

which signifies the Unity of God. The second part was sympathy for mankind so that one should desire for others what he desires for himself. Out of these two, the Messiah^{as} emphasised sympathy for man-

⁷⁵ There is none worthy of worship except Allāh. [Translator]

kind, for his age was in need of such emphasis. The other part, which is greater and is the fountainhead of the Majesty and Unity of God, i.e.,

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ⁷⁶

was emphasised by Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa} because in his age emphasis was needed on that part. Now it is our time and in this age both these wrongs had reached their climax; contravening the rights of people and slaying innocent persons had become part of the Muslim belief and, in consequence of this false doctrine, thousands of innocent people had been put to sword by the savages. On the other hand disregard of the rights of the Creator had also reached its climax and had become a part of Christian doctrine...

Thus in this age God, in view of the disregard of human rights, has named me the Messiah and sent me as the *Avatār* of Jesus the Messiah^{as}; in the same way, in respect of the disregard for the rights of the Creator, God has named me Muḥammad and Aḥmad and, for the spreading of Divine Unity, He made me the like of Muḥammad^{sa} and his *Avatār*. In this sense, I am both Jesus the Messiah and Muḥammad the Mahdī. Messiah is a title that was bestowed upon Jesus^{as}, which means he who touches God, partakes of the favour of God and is His vicegerent and adopts truth and righteousness. Mahdī is also a title which was bestowed upon Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}. It means

⁷⁶ Ibid. [Translator]

one who by his very nature is rightly guided, is heir to all guidance, and is an embodiment of the reflection of God's attribute *Hādī* [the Guide]. The grace and mercy of God Almighty has made me an heir to both these titles in this age and has combined these two titles in my person. In line with these meanings, I am both Jesus the Messiah and Muḥammad the Mahdī. In Islamic idiom, this kind of advent is called *Burūz*.⁷⁷ I have been bestowed two types of *Burūz*, the *Burūz* of Jesus^{as} and the *Burūz* of Muḥammad^{sa}. By way of *Burūz*, therefore, my being is a combination of the beings of these two Prophets. In my capacity of Jesus the Messiah, it is my function to restrain the Muslims from wild attacks and bloodshed. The Aḥādīth set forth clearly, that when the Messiah comes back to the world, he would put an end to all religious wars. This is now being done...

In my capacity as Muḥammad the Mahdī, it is my function to re-establish the Unity of God with heavenly signs, for our lord and master the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa} had established the Majesty and Power and Might of God in the hearts of the idolaters of Arabia through heavenly signs. I have been helped by the Holy Spirit in the same manner.

[Government Angrezī aur Jihad, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 23-29]

⁷⁷ Re-advent by way of reflection. [Publisher]

Two Aspects of the perfection of Faith

It should be borne in mind that all bounties and the perfection of the faith that were bestowed on the Holy Prophet^{sa}, had two aspects: first, the perfection of the guidance, and secondly, the completion of the propagation of the guidance. The perfection of the guidance from every aspect took place through his first advent, and the completion of the propagation of the guidance was accomplished through his second advent. The verse of the *Sūrah Al-Jumu'ah*:

الْآخَرِينَ مِنْهُمْ⁷⁸

which refers to another people who will be prepared through his grace and instruction. This makes it clear that he will have a second advent, and this advent—which is by way of reflection—is now taking place. Thus this is the time of the completion of the propagation of the guidance.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, p. 10]

In addition to the natural resemblance which this humble one possesses to other great ones and that is set out in detail in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*, I have a singular resemblance with the Messiah^{as} on account of which I have been sent with his name so that I should demolish the doctrine of the cross. I have been sent to break the cross and to slaughter the swine. I have descended from heaven with angels on my right and left, whom God, Who is ever with me, will cause to

⁷⁸ Others from among them... Al-Jumu'ah, 62:4 [Publisher]

enter, and indeed is already causing to enter, into every eager heart for the achievement of my purpose. Even if I were to remain silent and my pen were to refrain from writing, even then the angels that have descended with me would not stop their function. They have been furnished with powerful maces with which to break the cross and to demolish the temple of creature-worship.

[*Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 11, footnote]

God Almighty has raised me to bear witness against the Christians of this age and has commanded me to proclaim that the deification of the Son of Mary^{as} is a false doctrine and amounts to the denial of God. He has honoured me with His converse, has sent me with many signs, and has displayed many miracles in my support. By His grace and bounty, our company is such as leads to God. I believe that he who stays in this company for a time with a pure and holy intent and remains with us steadfastly seeking knowledge, would ultimately believe in God even if he were an atheist. It behoves a Christian, find, who entertains the fear of God Almighty and who is in search for the True God and hungers and thirsts for Him, that he should cast aside senseless tales and myths and, seeking clear proofs, should remain in my company for some time. He would then see how God, Who is the Master of heaven and earth, would display His heavenly signs to him. It is, however, a pity that there are few who truly seek God and wander in His search day and night.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, p. 55]

Reformation of the Evil Doctrine of Trinity

As I have been sent to reform the evils of the doctrine of Trinity, my heart is grieved beyond measure at the contemplation of the painful fact that there are more than four hundred million people who deem Jesus^{as} to be God. I do not believe that I have ever been hurt or grieved by anything in my whole life as I have been hurt and grieved by this doctrine. Had it been possible for me to expire under a load of grief and sorrow, I would have died grieving over the question why people abandon God Who has no associate, and worship a humble man, and why do they not believe in the Prophet^{sa} who had come into the world with true guidance and the straight path. I have always been apprehensive lest I should die through the shock of this sorrow...Where other people seek heaven, the heaven that I seek, in the face of this agony, is that I might witness in my lifetime mankind being rescued from this idolatry and that the glory of God be made manifest. My soul supplicates constantly: Lord, if I am from Thee and the shade of Thy grace accompanies me, then let me witness the day when this calumny—that, God forbid, the Messiah^{as} claimed to be God—will be proven false. For a long time, I have been praying five times a day that God might bestow inner sight upon these people so that they should believe in His Unity and should recognize His

Messenger^{sa} and should discard the doctrine of Trinity.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 161-163]

The Aḥādīth set forth that the principal purpose of the Promised Messiah would be to wipe out the wiles of the Christians and he would demolish their doctrine of the cross. God Almighty has so brought it about that the doctrine of the Christian faith has been shattered at my hands. Having been bestowed perfect inner sight by God Almighty, I have established that the accursed death that is attributed, God forbid, to the Messiah^{as} and which is the very basis of salvation through the cross can on no account be attributed to him. The connotation of the word *la 'nat'*⁷⁹ can in no way be rightly applicable to a righteous person. Christian clergymen have been so frustrated by this novel point of view which blows their doctrine to pieces that all those who have learnt of it have realized that it has demolished the religion of the cross. From the letters that I have received from some of them, I have perceived that they are frightened at this decisive research and have realized that the foundation of the doctrine of the cross would thereby tumble down and that its fall would be a fearful one.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 262-263, footnote]

One of the characteristics of the perfect elects of God is that they exhibit heavenly signs. I record with the

⁷⁹ Curse [Publisher]

utmost gratitude that all these signs have been fulfilled to a perfect degree in the case of this servant of the Holy One. Today's bigoted clerics of the Christian faith, who concealed the truth by their assertion that our Holy Prophet^{sa} worked no miracle have been completely refuted and put to shame by the response made by God Almighty, Who has displayed clear signs in support of this servant of His.

Time was when the preachers of the Gospels went about the streets and the bazaars repeating shamelessly the lie that no prophecy had been made and no miracle had been worked by our lord and master, the Seal of Prophets, the Best of Messengers and the purified ones, the Chief of the pure-natured and the righteous, the Beloved of the Lord of Unity, Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}. Now the time is that in addition to the thousands of miracles of our master, the Intercessor on behalf of sinners (the Holy Prophet^{sa}), which have been repeatedly mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and Aḥādīth and have been fully confirmed, God Almighty has exhibited hundreds of fresh signs that no opponent or denier can in any way match. We have humbly and gently urged upon Christians and other opponents, and do so again, that every religion which is established by God Almighty and preserves its verities, must from time to time produce some people as the deputies of their leader and guide and Messenger to prove that that he is alive through his spiritual blessings and is not dead. For, it is necessary that a Prophet who is followed and is accepted as

an Intercessor and Redeemer should be forever alive through his spiritual blessings. He should be stationed with his shining countenance in the heaven with honour, exaltation, and glory; and his sitting on the right hand of the Eternal, the Ever-Living, and Self-Subsisting, and Mighty God should be established by the manifestation of such Divine light that those who love him perfectly and obey him completely should necessarily enjoy the bounty of the Holy Spirit and of heavenly blessings. Such followers should obtain light from the light of their beloved Prophet whereby they should be able to remove the darkness of their age and to inspire in the hearts of eager people such firm and perfect faith in the existence of God as burns up all inclination towards sin and all low and mundane passions and desires. This alone is enough to prove that the Prophet is alive and is in heaven. We cannot offer gratitude enough to our God, the Lord of Glory, that by enabling us to love and obey His dear Prophet Muḥammad^{sa} and by bestowing upon us a perfect portion of the grace which is the sign of true righteousness and the true heavenly sign, He has proved to us that our beloved Prophet^{sa} is not dead, but is seated in the highest heaven on the right side of his Omnipotent King on the Throne of eminence and glory.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلَيْهِ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ⁸⁰

⁸⁰ O Allāh bless him and shower Your blessings and peace.
[Translator]

إِنَّ اللَّهَ وَمَلَائِكَتَهُ يُصَلُّونَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا
صَلُّوا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا⁸¹

[Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 15, pp. 137-139]

For this reason alone, this humble one has been commissioned to establish this Community. I would like to greatly expand the circle of those who join my company, and enable such people who are desirous of fostering their faith, love and certainty, to stay in my company day and night. May they be shown the light and the blessings that have been shown to me. May they partake of the zeal that has been granted to this humble one, that the light of Islam may spread in the entire world, and the black mark of hatred and disgrace may be washed away from the face of Muslims. With that glad tidings, God sent me and said:

بخرام کہ وقت تو نزدیک رسید۔ وپائے محمدیاں بر منار بلند تر محکم افتاد۔⁸²

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 22-23]

God wills that of all the souls that inhabit the different parts of the world—whether in Europe or Asia—those who possess pure natures should be drawn towards Unity, and His creatures may be united on one faith. This is the aim of God, with which I have been raised. So follow this aim but with tenderness, good manners

⁸¹ Allāh and His angels send blessings on the Prophet^{sa}. O ye who believe! you *also* should invoke blessings on him and salute *him* with the salutation of peace.—Al-Aḥzāb, 33:57 [Publisher]

⁸² Step forth for thy time has drawn near and the feet of the Muslims have been planted on a high tower. [Translator]

and fervent prayers. Until God raises someone with the Holy Spirit, you should continue to work together after I have gone.

[Al-Waṣīyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 306-307]

What is needed today is not the sword but the pen. As a result of the doubts which our opponents have raised concerning Islam, and the assault that they have planned to mount against the true religion revealed by God Almighty, using all the ploys of science and other methods available to them, I have been drawn to think that I should equip myself with the armament of the pen and enter the arena of science and intellectual progress to demonstrate the spiritual valour and inner power of Islam. I was not myself fitted for this field, but the grace and limitless bounty of God desires that the honour of His faith should be demonstrated at the hands of a humble one like me.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 59-60]

Call to the Truth

قُلْ إِنْ كَانَ لِلرَّحْمَنِ وَكَدٌّ ۖ فَأَنَا أَوَّلُ الْعَبْدِينَ ﴿٨٣﴾

I address this announcement to the Christian clergymen with great humility, respect and lowliness. Were it true that Jesus the Messiah^{as} was actually the son of God, or God Himself, I would have been the first to worship him and I would have propagated his god-

⁸³ Say, if there had been a son to Gracious God, I would have been the first of worshippers.—Al-Zukhruf, 43:82 [Publisher]

head throughout the country and would never have given up this propagation even if I had been persecuted or killed or slaughtered or cut to pieces in his cause. But, dear ones, may God have mercy on you and open your eyes, Prophet Jesus^{as} is not God, but only a Prophet and not a speck more than that. I call God to witness that I bear him such love as you do not. You can never recognize him with the light with which I recognize him. There is no doubt that he was a beloved and exalted Prophet of God and was one of those who are particularly blessed by God and are purified by His hand. But he was neither God nor the son of God. I do not say this on my own. Indeed, God, Who is the Creator of heaven and earth, appeared to me and has made me the Promised Messiah for this latter age. He has revealed to me that the truth is that Jesus son of Mary^{as} was not God or the son of God. God has informed me that the Prophet who brought the Qur'ān and called people to Islam is a true Prophet^{sa} and that he is the one under whose feet lies salvation, and no one can ever achieve any light without following him. When my God disclosed to me the high status and greatness of this Prophet^{sa}, I fell atremble and my body was shaken, for as people have so exaggerated their praise of Jesus the Messiah^{as} that they have deified him, but people have not recognized the true status of that Holy Prophet^{sa} in the same way and they are yet unaware of his lofty status. He is the one Prophet^{sa} who planted the seed of Divine Unity in such a manner that it still continues to

flourish. He is the only Prophet^{sa} who appeared at the time when the whole world had been corrupted and he departed at a time when he had spread Divine Unity all over the world like an ocean. He is the only Prophet^{sa} concerning whom God has exhibited His jealousy in every age and has manifested thousands of miracles in his support and affirmation. In this age too that Holy Prophet^{sa} was greatly defamed. Therefore, God's jealousy was stirred more than it had been stirred in any past age and He sent me as the Promised Messiah so that I should bear witness to his Prophethood before the whole world. If I put forward this claim without any argument to support it, I am false. But if God bears witness to my truth with such signs as have no parallel from east to west and from north to south, then justice and fear of God make it incumbent that I should be accepted with all my teaching. God has exhibited such signs in my support that if they had been displayed to the people who were destroyed by water, or fire, or wind, they would not have been so destroyed. But how shall I describe the people of this age? They are like the unfortunate one who possesses eyes but does not see, who possesses ears but does not hear, who possesses understanding but does not comprehend. I cry for them but they laugh at me and I provide them with the water of life but they heap fire on me. God has appeared to me not only by His word but has also manifested Himself to me through His actions and has shown and will show such works in my support as are

not shown in support of anyone unless he is the recipient of special Divine favour. People abandoned me, but God has accepted me. Who is it who can compete with me in showing these signs? I have appeared so that God may appear through me. He was like a hidden treasure, but now, by sending me, He has designed to silence all atheists and all faithless ones who say that there is no God. Dear ones, to you who seek God, I convey the good news that the true God is He Who has revealed the Qur'ān, it is He Who has manifested Himself to me and Who is ever with me.

[Ḥaqīqat-ul-Waḥī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 617-620]

4

PROPAGATION, ESTABLISHMENT OF A HOLY JAMĀ‘AT, AND INSTRUCTIONS

الذين يبائعونك انما يبايعون الله يد الله فوق ايديهم

**“Those who pledge at your hand, pledge with Allāh. His
hand is above their hands.”**

[Divine revelation to the Promised Messiah^{as}]

“I am the citadel of security for this age.”

Greatness of the Movement and the Need of Helping It

Today, after a long interval, I wish to draw your attention to an important matter concerning the Divine scheme that God Almighty has entrusted to me for the support of Islam. I wish to expound before you the greatness of this Movement and the need for helping this scheme, as far as God Almighty has bestowed upon me the power of speech so that I should discharge the responsibility of propagation that is upon me. In this endeavour I am not concerned with the effect it might produce on the minds of the readers. My only purpose is to discharge adequately the duty that lies upon me and to convey the message, which is an obligation upon me, whether people listen to it with pleasure or look upon it with disdain, and whether they should think well of me in their hearts or otherwise.

وَأَفَوِّضُ أَمْرِي إِلَى اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ بِصِيرٍ بِالْعِبَادِ⁸⁴

Prevalence of Error and Misguidance

....O seekers of truth and true lovers of Islam! You are well-aware that the time through which we are passing is so dark that all matters of faith and conduct have become corrupted and a strong wind of error and misguidance is blowing from every direction. Mere

⁸⁴ I commit my affair to Allāh, and Allāh is well-aware of His servants. [Translator]

words have taken the place of faith. The term 'righteous action' is applied to a few ceremonies, extravagances and vain displays, and there is complete ignorance of true virtue. The philosophy and sciences of this age are also set against spiritual well-being. They have an ill-effect upon their votaries and are proven to pull them towards darkness. They stir up poisonous matters and awaken the sleeping Satan. Those connected with such philosophy and such sciences suffer so much from lack of faith that they ridicule Divinely promulgated principles and the prescribed forms of worship like Prayer and Fasting. Their hearts are devoid of any sense of God's greatness. Most of them are dyed in heresy and steeped in atheism, and though they are descended from Muslims, they are the enemies of the faith. Most students of colleges withdraw from their allegiance to faith and lose all sympathy for it before they have completed their studies. Here I have only mentioned one branch which, in this age, is loaded with the fruits of misguidance, but there are hundreds of other branches which are no less harmful. Honesty and integrity have departed from the world as if they never existed. Fraudulent and deceptive schemes for earning worldly benefits have multiplied enormously. The most mischievous person is accounted the ablest. All manner of unrighteousness, dishonesty, illegitimacy, deceit, falsehood, cunning and greed are on the increase. Merciless rancour and disputes are multiplying and beastly sentiments and emotions are

raging wherever you may look. As people get more and more proficient and cunning with regard to the current sciences and laws, to the same degree, their natural qualities of goodness, modesty, decency, fear of God and honesty are on the decline.

False Devices of the Christian Missionaries

The Christian doctrine is also preparing many schemes to demolish truth and faithfulness. To wipe out Islam, the Christians are diligently inventing and having recourse to all kinds of falsehood and make-belief, and are devising ever new schemes for pushing people into error and misguidance. They grievously defame that Perfect Man^{sa} who was the Pride of all holy ones, the Crown of all those who are close to God, and the Chief of all the great Messengers. So much so, that the audience in theatres is regaled with parodies of Islam and its Holy Prophet^{sa}. Such utterly false aspersions are cast on Islam and its Holy Founder^{sa} through these theatres as are meant to insult and defame them.

O Muslims, listen carefully. In order to obstruct the holy effects of Islam, the Christians have pressed into service every kind of complicated imposture and cunning device, and by spending money like water, they are making every effort to give currency to these aspersions, the details of which had better not be described in this article. Such is the magic and sorcery of the Christian people and the supporters of the Trinity, that unless God Almighty displays His pow-

erful hand which possesses the miraculous power to demolish their magic, there can be no hope whatsoever for simple hearts to find deliverance from this European sorcery.

Miracles of the Messiah to Counteract the Devices of the Christians

Therefore, in order to frustrate this magic, God Almighty granted to the true Muslims of this age the miracle that He honoured this servant of His with His revelation and special blessings. Having equipped me fully with minute knowledge of His ways, He sent me against the opponents with numerous heavenly gifts, divine wonders, and spiritual verities, so that with this Heavenly stone, the waxen idol prepared by the magic of the Christians might be broken. Thus, O ye Muslims, the appearance of this humble one is a miracle on the part of God Almighty for dispelling the darkness of these magicians. Was it not necessary that the world be shown a miracle in opposition to their magic? Does it appear strange and improbable in your eyes that in response to these cunning devices, which had bordered on magic, God Almighty should display a flash of truth which should have the effect of a miracle?

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 3-6]

At this point I wish to remove the misapprehension of some who are well-off and account themselves very generous and devoted to the faith, but who are wholly averse to spending their wealth in its proper place. They say, 'Had we found a righteous one enjoying

Allāh's support in this age, who had come from God to strengthen the faith, we would surely have sacrificed ourselves wholly in his cause; but what can we do when there is nothing but deceit and falsehood all around?'

Be it known to you, O people, that one has been sent for the support of the faith but you have not recognized him. He is among you and is the one who is now speaking, but your eyes are under heavy veils. If your hearts seek the truth, it is easy to test the claim of a person who says that God Almighty speaks to him. Come to me and stay with me for two or three weeks so that, if God Almighty should so will, you might be able to observe with your own eyes the blessings that are falling upon me like rain and the light of Divine revelations that are descending upon me. He who seeks is the one who finds, and he who knocks is the one for whom the door is opened. If you shut your eyes and hide yourselves in a dark room and then complain that you cannot see the sun, you complain in vain. O ignorant one, open the door of your chamber and lift the veil from your eyes so that you should not only see the sun but should be illumined by its light.

Some people say that it is enough support for the faith to form associations and establish schools, but they do not know what faith is or what the true purpose of our lives is or how this purpose might be achieved. Let them understand that the ultimate purpose of this life is to establish such a true and certain relationship with

God Almighty as should deliver one from one's selfish associations and bring one to the fountainhead of salvation. The ways of such perfect faith are not opened by means of human schemes and designs, nor can any man-made philosophy be of any avail. Rather it is God Almighty Who, through His special servants, always sends down this light from heaven at the time of darkness. He who comes from heaven leads to heaven.

So, O ye people who are sunk in the pit of darkness and are prisoners of doubts and misapprehensions and have become slaves of your passions, take no pride in your nominal and ceremonial Islam and do not depend upon your plans of forming associations and establishing schools to bring you true welfare and ultimate success. These devices are only of elementary benefit and can be regarded as the first stage of progress, but they are far removed from the true purpose. It is possible that through these devices intellects may be stimulated, or dispositions might become artistic, or logic might be bandied about, or academic distinctions might be acquired, and, perhaps, after a long period of study, they might prove of some help in achieving the true purpose, [but that would be a case of]:

مگر تا تریاق از عراق آورده شود مارگزیده مرده شود⁸⁵

⁸⁵ By the time the antidote is brought from Iraq, the snake-bitten one would die. [Translator]

Wake up, therefore, and be alert lest you should stumble and be confronted with the last journey in a condition of heresy and faithlessness. Be sure that any hope for prosperity in the hereafter cannot be based on these conventional sciences. What is needed is heavenly light that removes the dirt of doubts and misapprehensions and puts out the fire of lust and passion and draws one to God's true love, true devotion and true obedience. If you examine your conscience you will recognize that you have not yet achieved the true comfort and satisfaction which in an instant brings about spiritual transformation. It is a matter of utmost regret that you do not entertain for the heavenly dispensation even a fraction of the eagerness that you show in your ceremonial affairs and for spreading the conventional sciences. You are spending your lives mostly in works which have no connection with faith, or have only a slight connection which is nowhere near the true purpose. If you had possessed the faculties of understanding, which lead to the true purpose, you would not rest until you had achieved it. O people, you have been created for the recognition, love and obedience to your True Creator and your True God. So long as this purpose, which is the ultimate aim of your creation, does not manifest itself clearly in you, you are far away from true redemption. Were you to speak justly, you would be a witness to your own inner condition and would confess that instead of worshipping God, you have installed in your heart a mighty idol of world-worship

to which you prostrate yourselves a thousand times every moment. All your time is so devoted to idle and vain pursuits that you have no time for anything else. Do you realize what would be the result of such existence? Where is your sense of justice? Where is integrity? Where is the truthfulness, fear of God, honesty and meekness to which the Qur'ān calls you? You do not recall even once in a number of years that you have a God, nor do you ever reflect on that which you owe to Him. The truth is that you have no interest and no relationship with the truly Self-Subsisting One. You hardly even think of Him. You will cleverly contend that this is not so, but God's universal law puts you to shame when it reminds you that you do not possess the signs of the faithful ones. You claim vehemently that you are wise and serious-minded in your worldly affairs, yet your ability, intelligence and far-sightedness terminates within the sphere of the world. With this intelligence of yours, you cannot perceive even a small corner of that other universe wherein your souls have been created to dwell forever. You are content with the life of this world as if it would last forever; but not once in your lifetime do you recall that other universe whose joys possess true satisfaction and are eternal. How unfortunate it is that you are totally heedless of, and have shut your eyes to, a mighty matter and you run eagerly after passing and temporary things. You are well-aware that you will certainly be overtaken by a moment in which your life and all your desires will instantly come to an

end. It is a strange misfortune, however, that despite this knowledge you are wasting the whole of your time in running after the world, and this is not confined to legitimate means but you also resort to all kinds of illegitimate means beginning with falsehood and deceit and extending even to the unlawful shedding of blood. Despite all these shameful offences that are so widespread among you, you assert that you are in no need of heavenly light or a heavenly dispensation. On the contrary, you are set against it. You take the heavenly dispensation of God Almighty very lightly, so much so that you arrogantly and contemptuously find faults with it. You inquire repeatedly: 'How can we make sure that this Movement is from God?' I have already replied that you shall know this tree by its fruit and shall recognize this Sun by its light. I have conveyed this message to you and it is for you to accept it or not, to remember my words or to forget them.

A man is not valued while he lives; but, dear ones, you will recall my words after I am gone.

It would be appropriate for every member of the faith to shed tears of blood at the helplessness of Islam and the scarcity of Muslims.

The religion of God is confronted with a dangerous and terrible convulsion; disbelief and rancour have created a great uproar in the world.

Even he whose soul is bereft of all good, finds faults with the person of the Best of Messengers^{sa}.

Even he who is held in the prison of impurity is critical

of the Imām of the righteous.

The ill-starred wicked one shoots his arrow upon the innocent one; it behoves heaven to rain down stones on the earth.

Before your eyes Islam has fallen into dust; how then will you excuse yourselves before God, O ye who live in luxury?

Disbelief is rampant in every direction like the forces of Yazīd; and the true Faith is ill and helpless like Zāin-ul-‘Ābidīn.

Men of wealth are occupied with their own enjoyments; keeping company, happy and laughing, with their graceful idols.

The divines are at loggerheads with each other day and night in their ego-driven exchanges; and the ascetics are entirely heedless of the needs of the faith.

Everyone has taken up a position for his mean self; so that the side of the faith is left defenceless, and every enemy has leaped out of his ambush.

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 41-45]

Call of the Promised Messiah^{as}

In the same way I too have been sent to put forth plainly the commandments of the Holy Qur'ān. The only difference is that the first Messiah was given to Moses^{as} and this Messiah has been given to the 'like of Moses'. This much is beyond doubt. Yet I tell you truly that those who were revived by the Messiah^{as} are dead, but he who will drink of the cup that has been bestowed upon me will never die. If there is anyone else who can also utter the life-giving words that I speak and proclaim such wisdom as I do, then you are at liberty to conclude that I have not come from God

Almighty. However, if this wisdom and understanding—which serve as the water of life for those whose hearts are dead—is not procurable from any other source, then you have no excuse for the crime that you have rejected the fountain that has been opened from heaven. No one on earth can stop it. Do not rush towards confrontation lest you should deliberately invite the charge about which God says:

لَا تَقْفُ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ ۚ إِنَّ السَّمْعَ وَالْبَصَرَ
وَالْفُؤَادَ كُلُّ أُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ عَنْهُ مَسْئُولًا⁸⁶

A Call to All Muslims

Do not go too far in suspicion and mistrust lest you should be seized on account of what you allege and in this agony you might have to say:

مَا لَنَا لَا نَرَىٰ رِجَالًا كُنَّا نَعُدُّهُمْ مِّنَ الْأَشْرَارِ⁸⁷

...O ye Muslims, if you believe truly in God Almighty and in His Holy Prophet^{sa} and are awaiting Divine help, then be sure that the time of such help has arrived. This affair is not from man, nor has it been devised by man. In fact, this is the dawn which had been prophesised in Holy Scriptures from ancient times. God Almighty has remembered you at the time

⁸⁶ Follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge. Verily, the ear and the eye and the heart; all these shall be called to account.—Banī Isrāʾīl, 17:37 [Publisher]

⁸⁷ What has happened to us that we see not the men whom we used to reckon among the wicked?—Şād, 38:63 [Publisher]

of your dire need. You were about to fall into the pit of ruin, but His Compassionate Hand has come to your rescue. Be grateful and jump with joy that the day of your revival has arrived. God Almighty would not permit the ruin of the garden of His faith, which was irrigated by the blood of the righteous. He does not desire that, like the religions of other people, Islam also should become a collection of ancient tales, which should exhibit no current blessing. He Himself provides light when the darkness is at its height. Do you not look for a new moon after the night of complete darkness? You comprehend fully the physical law of nature, but, alas, you are wholly unaware of the spiritual law which it resembles.

A Warning to Selfish Divines and Men of Barren Piety

O selfish divines and men of barren piety! Fie on you that you do not desire the opening of the heavenly doors and wish that they should remain closed forever so that you might maintain your positions of eminence. Look into your hearts and examine your conscience. Is your life free from the worship of the world? Do your hearts not suffer from the rust which involves you in darkness? Are you in any way different from the Pharisees and jurists who, in the time of the Messiah^{as}, were wholly given to self-love? Is it not true that thereby you are yourselves furnishing a parallel for the appearance of the like of Jesus^{as} and are placing yourselves under the judgement of God

Almighty? I tell you truly that it is easier for a non-believer to become a believer than it is for you to believe. Many will come from East and West who will partake of this bounty, but you will die in your condition of rust. I wish you would reflect.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 103-105]

Time of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Has not the time of the last calamity, which was destined for the latter days of Islam, arrived? Can anyone prove from the Holy Qur'ān and Ḥadīth that a time is yet to come which will bring greater trials than those that are current today? Brethren, do not wrong your souls and reflect well that the time has arrived when external and internal trials have reached their climax. If you would put all these trials and tribulations on one side of the scale, and for the other side of the scale you would search through the Holy Qur'ān and the whole body of Aḥādīth, you would not find a thousandth part of the tribulations with which Islam is afflicted today. Which then is the time of a greater *Dajjāl* and greater tribulations which is yet to come? Can you point to any tribulation which is mentioned in the Holy Qur'ān and in the Aḥādīth and which is not to be encountered today? You might employ yourselves in this research to your last breaths, but you will not be able to show from the Holy Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth that there will ever be a time of greater tribulations than those with which we are faced today.

Gentlemen! even the father of your supposed *Dajjāl* could not have conceived of all the wickedness and deceit that is spreading in this age. Mankind is being led astray in a thousand ways, which would need volumes to describe, and the opponents have been so successful in their efforts to misguide people that hearts are atremble thereat. Their sciences and their philosophy have sown the seeds of such temerity and audacity that everyone of their votaries claims to be god. Wake up, therefore, and observe what sort of age we are witnessing and reflect how the trend of present thinking is opposed to the pure Unity of God, so much so that the very concept of Divine power is considered absurd, and he who talks of the Divine Decree is accounted a fool. Philosophers and their ilk are spreading atheism and trying to take possession of the whole machinery of Godhead. They want to control epidemics, to avert death, to cause rain, and to cultivate at will. In short, they want everything to be in their power. It is a matter for reflection that there is no end to all this misguidance and both wings of Islam are under assault.

O you who are asleep, awake! O you who are heedless, arise, for you are faced with a great revolution. This is the time for weeping and not for sleeping; and it is the time for supplication and not for mockery, ridicule and charging people with heresy. Pray that God Almighty may grant you sight so that you may perceive fully the present darkness and may see the light which Divine Mercy has prepared to dispel it.

Get up during the latter part of the night and seek guidance from God Almighty through weeping and crying and do not waste your time in contriving designs and praying against the Jamā‘at set up by God. God Almighty will not follow your heedless and misguided designs. He will make manifest to you the follies of your minds and hearts and will help His servant. He will not cut down the tree which He has planted with His own hand. Is there anyone among you who will cut down a tree which he expects to bear fruit? Then why would He, Who is All-Wise and All-Seeing and Most Merciful, cut down the tree, the blessed season of whose harvest He is awaiting? When you, being men, would not do such a thing, why would He do it Who knows all hidden things and reaches the bottom of every heart. Remember that in this confrontation you are striking your swords against your own limbs. Do not thrust your hand into fire lest the fire should flare up and consume it. Remember well that had this been man’s doing, there would have been many who would have destroyed it and it would not have survived for twelve years, which is an age of maturity. Do you recall any impostor who, having falsely claimed converse with God, has survived for such a long time? It is a pity that you do not reflect nor recall the verses of the Holy Qur’ān, wherein God says with reference to the Holy Prophet^{sa}, that had he falsely attributed the smallest thing to God, He would have severed his jugular vein. Who is dearer to God than the Holy Prophet^{sa}, that he should

not only survive such a great imposture, but should be enriched by Divine bounties? Brothers! refrain from self-deception and be not obstinate in matters which are specially in the knowledge of God. Break your habits, become new men and tread along the paths of righteousness so that He may have mercy on you and may forgive your sins. Fear God and restrain yourselves. Is there not one among you who is rightly guided? If you do not desist, God will soon bring help to His servant and will break up his enemies and you will be able to do him no harm.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 52-55]

Need for Purification to Find the Truth

O ye people, who are being called to goodness and righteousness, be sure that you will be drawn to God and will be cleansed of the evil stain of sin only when your hearts are filled with certainty. You might say that you already enjoy certainty, but you only deceive yourselves. You do not enjoy certainty because you do not possess its essentials. You do not refrain from sin and do not step forward as you should nor do you fear God as you ought to. Consider and reflect that a person who is certain that there is a serpent in a particular hole does not thrust his hand into that hole. He who is certain that a particular food is poisoned does not eat it. He who is certain that a thousand wild tigers abound in a forest will not carelessly wander into it. How can your hands and your feet and your ears and your eyes be daring enough to indulge in sin if you truly believe

in God and His judgement? Sin cannot overcome certainty. Can you thrust yourselves into a consuming fire? The walls of certainty rise to heaven, Satan cannot climb over them. Whoever has been purified, has been purified through certainty. Certainty invests a person with the strength to bear pain, so much so that it makes a king relinquish his throne and makes him put on the garb of a mendicant. Certainty makes every pain easy to endure. Certainty makes one behold God. All ‘Atonement’ is false and all ‘Redemption’ is vain. All purity proceeds only from certainty. It is only certainty that rescues from sin, leads to God, and puts a person ahead of the angels in sincerity and steadfastness. Any religion that does not provide the means for attaining certainty is false. Any religion that cannot exhibit God through sure means is false. Any religion that has nothing to offer except ancient tales is false. God is as He ever was, His powers are as they always were, and He has the ability to show signs as He always had; why then are you content with mere stories? The religion is dead whose miracles and whose prophecies are only tales. Ruined is the Jamā‘at on which God has not descended, and which the hand of God has not purified.

[Kashtī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 19, pp. 67-68]

I would like to urge seekers after truth who are fearful of their accountability before God, not to follow the Maulavīs of this day without full investigation and to beware of them, since the Holy Prophet^{sa} has himself warned against the Maulavīs of the latter days. Do not be confused by the *fatāwā* [religious edicts] of

these Maulavīs, for they are nothing new. If someone is in doubt concerning me and my claim, I proceed to set out an easy way of resolving these doubts, which, God willing, will satisfy a true seeker. Anyone who has such doubts should repent sincerely and offer two *rak'as* of prayer at night, reciting *Sūrah Yā Sīn* in the first *rak'a* and *Sūrah Al-Ikhlāṣ* twenty-one times in the second *rak'a*. Thereafter, calling down *Durūd* [blessings on the Holy Prophet^{sa}] three hundred times and asking *Istighfār* [forgiveness of sins] three hundred times, he should supplicate in the following words:

‘O Powerful and Noble One! You know all hidden things and we do not know. The accepted one and the righteous one, the rejected one and the impostor, none can remain hidden from You. We, therefore, humbly ask You to reveal to us the true standing of this person who claims to be the Promised Messiah, the Mahdī and the *Mujaddid* [Reformer of the age]. Is he true or false? Is he, in Your estimation, an accepted one or a rejected one? Disclose his reality to us through a dream or vision or revelation, so that if he be a rejected one, we should not go astray by accepting him, and if he is an accepted one and is from You, we should not be ruined by denying and ridiculing him. Guard us against every trial, for You have every power (Āmīn).’

This supplication should be made for at least two weeks with an uncommitted mind. He whose mind is already full of rancour and ill-thinking and desires to

know the truth concerning one whom he detests, is visited by Satan who, in accord with the darkness that fills his mind, injects further dark thoughts into it and his last condition becomes worse than the first. Thus, if you wish to ascertain something from God Almighty, you should first cleanse your bosom of all rancour and enmity and seek the light of guidance after completely emptying your mind both of rancour and of love. Then, according to His promise, God will surely bestow light upon you, which will be entirely free from any smoke of egoistic thoughts. O ye seekers after truth, do not be misled by what these Maulavīs say. Arise and strive to seek help from that Strong, Powerful, All-Knowing and Absolute Guide. Listen! I have conveyed to you this spiritual message, and the rest is up to you. *Peace be upon him who follows the guidance.*

The conveyer of the message

Ghulām Aḥmad

[Nishān-e-Āsmānī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, pp. 400-401]

Opponents Destined to be Humiliated

It is worth bearing in mind that God Almighty will not leave this Jamā'at of His without furnishing proof of its truth. He has Himself said, as mentioned in *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*: 'A Warner came into the world and the world did not accept him, but God will accept him and will establish his truth with powerful assaults'. Those who have rejected me, or are eager to reject me, are destined to be humiliated and

brought low. They do not reflect that if all this had been human imposture, I would have been ruined long ago, for God Almighty has such enmity with an impostor as He has not with anyone else in the world. They do not consider how a liar could possess such steadfastness and courage. They do not realize that only he can speak so splendidly and majestically who enjoys the support of the unseen and only such a one can have the courage to stand up alone against the whole world. Be on the look out, for the days are coming, indeed they are near, when the enemy will be disgraced and friends will be most cheerful.

Blessings upon Those who Accept

Who is my friend? It is he who has accepted me before seeing any sign and has offered his life, property and honour in such a manner as if he had witnessed thousands of signs This is my Jamā'at. These are my friends who found me alone and helped me, and found me sorrowful and consoled me, and being unacquainted honoured me like a friend. May God Almighty have mercy on them. If anyone accepts the truth only after witnessing signs, what is that to me and what reward will he obtain and what honour would he find in the presence of the Lord of Honour? Those alone have accepted me in reality who observed me with a discerning eye and weighed my words with intelligence and considered my circumstances, and listened to me, and reflected and, on that basis, God opened their hearts to me and they joined

me. He alone is with me who gives up his own pleasure for my pleasure, and makes me an Arbiter in whatever he does, and walks along my path, and is wholly devoted to me, and has discarded his own self. I am compelled to affirm with a sigh that those who seek clear signs will not be honoured by my Lord God with praiseworthy titles and honourable ranks which will be bestowed upon the righteous ones who recognized the hidden secrets and who smelled the fragrance of the servant [of God] who was hidden under His mantle. For example, what merit can be claimed by the one who offers his salutation to a prince whom he observes in his pomp and glory, surrounded by his men? Deserving of merit is the one who encounters him in the guise of a beggar and recognizes him. It is not within my power to bestow such insight upon anyone for it is only the One Who bestows it. Those whom He holds dear, He invests with the discernment of faith. These are the things through which those who are inclined towards guidance are guided and the same things become the cause of more crookedness for those whose hearts are crooked.

[Ā'īna-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 349-350]

Your opposition to me is far removed from righteousness. Your reliance is totally on such Aḥādīth as are inauthentic and fabricated, or you do not understand their true meaning. As against this, my claim is based on reasoned discernment. I have such faith in the revelation that has informed me of the death of Jesus^{as}, and of my being the Promised Messiah that was

to come, as I have in the Holy Qur'ān. This faith is not merely well-intentioned but has been bestowed upon me by the light of Divine revelation which shines on me like the sun. How can I expel from my heart the certainty which has been carried to the extreme by the continuous display of extraordinary signs, certain knowledge and the daily experience of clear and certain converse with God? Shall I reject the bounty of understanding and true knowledge which has been bestowed upon me? Shall I turn away from the heavenly signs that are shown to me? Shall I disobey the commandment of my Lord and Master? What shall I do? Death is a thousand times more welcome to me than that I should turn away from Him Who has revealed Himself to me in all His beauty and majesty. Is this life such a long one, and are the people of the world so faithful to me that for their sake I should abandon the Beloved Friend? I know well that my opponents rely only on a moth-eaten crust and they desire that I too should adopt it and should give up the kernel. They try to intimidate and threaten me but, by the Dear One Whom I have recognized, I attach no weight to their threats. I would prefer sorrow in His company to the joy in the company of another. I would prefer death in His company than enjoy a long life by abandoning Him. Just as you cannot say that it is night when you have seen the day, in the same way I cannot consider the light that has been shown to me as darkness. When you are not prepared to renounce your doctrines which are a collection of

doubts and superstitions, how can you expect me to leave the path upon which I perceive that a hundred suns are shining? Am I insane or mad that I should not accept the truth when God Almighty has exhibited it to me with evident signs? I call God Almighty to witness that thousands of signs have been displayed to me for my satisfaction, some of which I have communicated to others and some of which I have not communicated to anyone. I find that these signs are from God Almighty—Who has no associate—and no one else beside Him has the power to exhibit them.

I have also been bestowed knowledge of the Qur'ān and the true meanings of Aḥādīth. Why should I give up the bright path and adopt the path of ruin? What I say is based on reasoned discernment and what you say is only speculation. Speculation does not prevail in opposition to the truth. It is like a blind person plunging along on uneven ground in the darkness, not knowing where his foot falls. How shall I then exchange the light that has been bestowed on me, with darkness? When I find that God hears my prayers, displays great signs in my support, talks to me, and discloses the secrets of the hidden to me, helps me with His powerful hand against my enemies, and bestows victory upon me in every field, and gives me knowledge of the deeper meanings and verities of the Holy Qur'ān, how then can I abandon such a Powerful and Supreme God and accept someone else in His place?

I am fully convinced that it is the Powerful God Who has manifested Himself to me and Who has enlightened me of His existence and His Word and His work. I fully believe that the manifestations of His power which I see, and the knowledge of the hidden that He discloses to me, and the Strong Hand from which I receive help at every time of danger; are all the attributes of the Perfect and True God Who created Adam^{as}, and appeared to Noah^{as}, and showed the miracle of the flood, and helped Moses^{as} when Pharaoh was about to destroy him, is the same God Who bestowed complete victory on Muḥammad, Chief of the Messengers^{sa}, guarding him against the designs of the disbelievers and the pagans. This same God has manifested Himself to me in these latter days.

[Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah, Part V, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 21, pp. 296-298]

What is true light? It is that which descends from heaven in the guise of convincing signs and bestows comfort and satisfaction on the hearts. This light is needed by everyone who is desirous of obtaining salvation; for he who is not free from doubt is not free from the possibility of chastisement. He who is too unfortunate to see God in this world will also fall into darkness on the Day of Judgement, as He says:

مَنْ كَانَ فِي هَذِهِ أَعْمَى فَهُوَ فِي الْآخِرَةِ أَعْمَى⁸⁸

God has indicated many times in His book that He shall enlighten with His signs the hearts of those

⁸⁸ Whoso is blind in this world will be blind in the hereafter.—Bani Isrā'il, 17:73 [Publisher]

who seek Him until they are able to see Him, and that He shall manifest His greatness to them until all other greatnesses will become as nothing before them. These are the words that I heard directly from God in His converse, until my soul cried out that this is the way to reach God and that this is the way to overcome sin. To arrive at the truth, it is necessary that we should tread the path of truthfulness. Hypothetical designs and imaginary projects will not help us. I am witness to the fact, and place this testimony before the whole world, that it is from the Qur'ān that I have discovered the reality that leads to God. I have heard the voice and have seen the signs of the Powerful Arm of God Who has sent the Qur'ān. So I believe that He is the True God and the Master of all the worlds. My heart is as full of this certainty as the ocean is full of water. I, therefore, call everyone to this faith and this light on the basis of reasoned conviction. We have found the true light with which all curtains of darkness are lifted and the heart grows cold to everything beside Allāh. This is the only way whereby man emerges from the passions of the self and its darkness, just as a serpent emerges from its skin.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, p. 65]

Conveying the Message to All and Sundry

Today, for the purpose of conveying the message in a conclusive manner, I have made up my mind to publish forty announcements inviting those who oppose

and deny me, so that on the Day of Judgement I should be able to plead before God, the One, that I had fulfilled the purpose for which I had been sent. So, with full respect and humility, I send this announcement to Muslim and Christian divines, and to Hindūs and Ārya Pundits, informing them that I have been sent to the world for the reformation of moral, doctrinal and spiritual weaknesses and errors. I follow in the footsteps of Jesus^{as}, and, in this sense, I am called the Promised Messiah. I have been commanded to spread the truth in the world through miraculous signs and holy teachings. I am opposed to the use of the sword in support of the faith and the slaying of God's creatures in the name of religion. I have been appointed that, so far as it may be possible for me, I should remove all these errors from the minds of the Muslims and should call them to pure morals, perseverance, meekness, justice and righteousness. I proclaim to all the Muslims, Christians, Hindūs, and Āryas, that I have no enemy in the world. I love human beings with the love that a compassionate mother has for her children and even more so. I am the enemy only of the false doctrines which slay the truth. Human sympathy is my duty, and discarding falsehood, idolatry, every type of misconduct and wrongdoing, injustice, and immorality, is my principle.

What has roused my sympathy is that I have discovered a gold mine and have been informed of a deposit of precious stones. In this mine I have been fortunate

enough to find a shining and priceless diamond. Its value is so great that if I were to divide its price among the whole of mankind, each of them would become wealthier than the person who owns the largest amount of gold and silver in the world. What is that diamond? It is the True God, and to acquire Him means to recognize Him, to believe in Him truly, to establish the relationship of true love with Him, and to receive true blessings from Him. Having found such great wealth, it would be a great wrong that I should deprive mankind of it and that they should die of hunger while I live in luxury. This I will not do. My heart burns at the contemplation of their poverty and hunger. My soul is in travail at the perception of their darkness and privation. I desire that their houses should be filled with heavenly wealth and that they should acquire so many jewels of truth and certainty that they should be filled to their capacity.

Of course everyone loves his own species. Even the ants love their own kind, unless they happen to be overcome by some selfish desire. Therefore, he who calls people to God Almighty has an obligation to love them the most. And I love mankind the most. I have no personal enmity with anyone; I am the enemy only of their misconduct and of the wrongs they commit and of their disobedience and rebellion. Out of my eager love for mankind, I offer them the treasure that I have received, which is the key to all the treasures and bounties of Paradise. The fact that the treasures that have been bestowed upon me comprise

of real diamonds, gold and silver can be easily ascertained. All these coins and jewels bear the royal mark, that is to say, I have heavenly testimonies which no one else has. I have been told that of all the faiths, Islam is the only true faith; and that of all guidance, the guidance contained in the Qur'ān alone is true in every respect and is free from human interpolation. I have been made to understand that of all the Messengers^{as}, the one who has brought the most perfect holy and wise teaching and who practically demonstrated human excellences at the highest level is our lord and master Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}. I have been informed through pure and sacred revelation vouchsafed to me by God Almighty that I am the Promised Messiah and the Promised Mahdī sent by Him, and that I am the *Ḥakam* [Arbiter] of the internal and external differences. The Holy Prophet^{sa} has honoured me by bestowing upon me the names of Messiah and Mahdī. God has also called me by the same names in His direct word. What is more, the condition of the world in the present age also demanded that these should be my names. These are thus the three witnesses to these names of mine. I call to witness my God, Who is the Master of heaven and earth, that I am from Him and He bears witness to me through His signs. If anyone can compete with me in the matter of heavenly signs, then I am false. If anyone can prove himself my equal in the matter of the acceptance of prayers, then I am false. If anyone can prove himself my equal in expounding the verities and the fine

points of the Holy Qur'ān, then I am false. If anyone can prove my equal in disclosing that which is hidden and foretelling, with the mighty Power of God, the mysteries before their time, then I am not from Him.

Divine Blessings of Islam

Where now are the Christian ministers who have said that, God forbid, no prophecy or miraculous matter was disclosed by our lord and the lord of mankind, Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}? I say truly that he alone is the perfect man whose prophecies and acceptance of prayers and display of other miraculous matters is something which even now rages like the ocean through his true followers. Which other religion beside Islam possesses this quality and this power? Where are the people, and in which country do they dwell, who can compete with Islam in the matter of Divine blessings and signs? A person who follows a religion which does not partake of the heavenly spirit, wastes his faith. That religion alone is worth the name which is alive and possesses the spirit of life and leads one to the Living God. I claim not only that the hidden is disclosed to me through the holy revelation vouchsafed to me by God Almighty and that miraculous signs are shown to me, but I also say that whoever follows me with a pure heart and with true love for God and His Prophet^{sa}, will also receive this bounty from God Almighty. But remember that this door is closed upon all opponents; otherwise let someone from them compete with me in the matter

of heavenly signs. I affirm that no one will be able to do so. This is a living proof of the truth of Islam and the truth of my claim....

Peace be upon him who follows the guidance.

Announced by:

Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān

The Promised Messiah

July 23, 1900

[Arba'in No. 1, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 343-346]

Repent and fear God and do not transgress. If the hearts have not hardened, then why is there such daring to declare a person to be an infidel while he believes that the Holy Prophet^{sa} is *Khātām-ul-Anbiyā'* in the true sense of the words, accepts the Qur'ān as the *Khātām-ul-Kutub*, believes in all the Prophets^{as}, adheres to the Qiblah, and accepts as lawful or unlawful whatever is so declared by the Islamic Shariah?

O ye liars! I have not insulted any Prophet, nor have I contradicted any true doctrine. But what can I do if you refuse to take heed. You yourselves confess that an average martyr can be bestowed partial exaltation over a great Prophet. It is true that I enjoy the grace of God no less than the Messiah did, but this cannot be called infidelity, rather it is as gratitude for Divine favour. You consider this an infidelity because you do not comprehend Divine mysteries. What will you say concerning him who said:

هو افضل من بعض الانبياء⁸⁹

If, in your estimation, I am a *kāfir*, then I am a *kāfir* as was the Son of Mary^{as} in the estimation of the Jewish Pharisees. I enjoy God's grace more than he did, but you cannot bear its disclosure. It is not easy to call me a *kāfir*; in doing so, you take upon yourselves a heavy burden and will be called to account for it.

O ye unfortunate people, where have you fallen? Which of your hidden misconduct has overtaken you? If you had the least good in you, God would not destroy you. You have missed a great opportunity of acquiring plentiful merit, but there is yet some time, so desist. Will you fight God like a foolish one who does not retire in front of a powerful opponent until he is beaten and trampled upon and finally falls down half dead with broken bones? What did the Jews gain by fighting that you will?

هذا و بعد الموت نحن نخاصم⁹⁰

The Sufis have said a lot about the possibility of a human being attaining high excellences, but today they are asleep. O you who are wise, recognize me through my works! If I do not do the works and do not show the signs which ought to proceed from one who enjoys Divine support, then do not accept me, but if such works and such signs proceed from me, then do not deliberately jump into the pit of ruin. Give up all mistrust and desist from evil conjectures inas-

⁸⁹ He will be exalted over some of the Prophets^{as}. [Publisher]

⁹⁰ This is for the world, and we shall contend after death. [Publisher]

much as the sky is turning red on account of your defaming a holy one, but you perceive not, and the eyes of angels are shedding blood and you see not. God is exhibiting His glory and the doors and walls are shaking. Where is the intellect that understands and where are the eyes that recognize the time? A command has been promulgated in heaven; are you upset by it? Will you inquire from the Lord of Honour: Why did You do this? Desist, O foolish one, for it is not good for you to stand in the way of the lightening.

[Sirāj-e-Munīr, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, pp. 6-7]

Divine Revelation not Sealed Up

My dear people! no man can fight God in His designs. Take it for certain that Divine revelation, which was vouchsafed to the noble Prophets of God, is the source of perfect knowledge. God, Who is an Ocean of grace, does not intend to seal up His revelation and thus destroy the world. The doors of His revelation and His converse are ever open, but you must search for them in the proper way, only then will they be facilitated for you. The water of life has descended from heaven and has lodged in its proper place. In order to drink this water, you must arrive at the fountain by whatever means possible and put your mouths to it and drink your fill. The whole good fortune of man consists in that he should run in the direction in which he perceives the light and should adopt the way which leads to the Friend Whom he has lost. You observe that light always descends upon the earth from

heaven. In the same way, the true light of guidance also descends from heaven. Man's own devices and presumptions cannot procure true understanding for him. Can you find God without His making Himself manifest? Can you see in the dark without heavenly light? If you can, perhaps you might also be able to see in this respect. But our eyes, though full of sight, are dependent upon heavenly light to be able to see; and our ears, though equipped with hearing, are dependent upon the air which blows from God. False is the god who is silent and has to be discovered by our guesses. The Perfect and Living God is He Who has always made Himself manifest, and in this age too He has willed to make Himself manifest. The windows of heaven are about to open. The dawn is at hand. Blessed are those who will arise and seek the True God, Who is overtaken by no calamity and the flash of Whose glory is subject to no accident. In the Holy Qur'ān, God Almighty says:

اللَّهُ نُورُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ⁹¹

i.e., God is the light of heaven and earth. He sheds His light everywhere. He is the Sun Who casts His light upon the sun. He is the life of all living creatures in the earth. He is the True Living God. Blessed is he who accepts Him.

[Islāmī Uṣūl ki Philosophy, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 10, pp. 443-444]

⁹¹ Al-Nūr 24:36 [Publisher]

Pleas to the Wealthy, the Rulers and the Wise

O ye wealthy ones and o ye rulers! there are very few among you who fear God and follow His ways with righteousness. Most of you spend your life in pursuit of worldly domains and worldly possessions and you do not remember death. Every wealthy one who does not observe the daily prayers and is heedless of God carries the burden of all his servants. Every wealthy one who indulges in liquor also carries the sin of those of his dependants who join him in drink.

O ye wise ones! this world is not everlasting. Restrain yourselves and give up all intemperance. Refrain from the use of all intoxicants. Liquor is not the only thing that is destructive for humans, but Opium, Ganja, Hemp, Bhung, Palm-wine and every type of intoxicant which becomes a habit, affects the brain, and ultimately causes ruin. Keep away from all of these. I cannot understand why you should use such things through the evil of which thousands of addicts like you depart from this life every year, and the torment of the hereafter is in addition. Become pious so that you may live long and receive blessings from God. It is an accursed life to indulge excessively in luxury; it is an accursed life to be extremely ill-mannered and uncompassionate; and it is an accursed life to be neglectful of sympathy for God's creatures. A wealthy one will be called to account about the rights of God and the rights of man as much as, or

even more than a beggar. How unfortunate is the person who relies upon this short life and turns wholly away from God and has recourse fearlessly to that which is forbidden by Him as if in his case it were lawful. When angry, he behaves like a mad man and abuses one and wounds another and is ready to kill a third. When he is in the grip of passion, he carries his shameless conduct to the extreme. He will never achieve true happiness even unto his death. Dear ones! you have come into this world for a short time, the greater part of which is past, so do not incur the wrath of your Lord. A human government more powerful than you can destroy you if you offend it; then consider how you can escape God's displeasure. If you are accounted righteous in the estimation of God, no one can destroy you and He Himself will safeguard you, and your enemy who wishes to destroy you will not be able to overcome you. Otherwise, you will have no guardian and you will pass a restless life in fear of your enemies or afflicted with other calamities, and your last days will be passed in grief and sorrow. God becomes the refuge of those who identify themselves with Him. So come to God and give up every opposition to Him and be not neglectful in the discharge of your duties to Him, and wrong not His creatures by your tongue or your hand and be ever fearful of the wrath of Heaven. This alone is the way of deliverance.

True Worship

Man claims to worship God, but worship does not consist of a lot of prostrations and bowing and standing, or rotating the beads of a rosary countless times. Worship means to be so drawn to God, out of love for Him, that one's ego should disappear altogether. First, there should be firm faith in the existence of God and a full appreciation of His Beauty and Beneficence. Then there should be such love of God that the heart should ever feel its flame and this condition should be manifest all the time from one's countenance. God's greatness should so inspire the heart that the whole world should appear dead in comparison. His being should be the source of all fear. Pain endured for Him should be all joy, His company should be a source of delight, and the heart should find no comfort with anyone other than Him. To reach such a condition is termed 'worship'; but it is not reached without the special help of God Almighty. That is why He has taught us the prayer:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ⁹²

That is, we do worship Thee, but how can we do justice to Thy worship until we receive Thy special help? To worship God, having made Him one's True Beloved, is the essence of sainthood, which is the height of spiritual progress, but this cannot be achieved without His help. The indication of having achieved it

⁹² Al-Fātiḥah, 1:5 [Publisher]

is that God's greatness and love should be established in the heart and the heart should rely completely on Him and love Him alone. And he should prefer Him to everything and make His remembrance the purpose of his life. Such a person would be ready to carry out with the eagerness of love the most testing commands of God, even if, like Abraham^{as}, he is commanded to slaughter his own son or to jump into the fire. He will leave no stone unturned in obedience to God and in his eagerness to win His pleasure. This door is very narrow and this drink is very bitter. There are few who enter this door and drink of this bitter cup. It is no great thing to refrain from adultery or killing a person unlawfully; nor is it a great achievement to refrain from bearing false witness. But to prefer God to everything and to welcome every bitterness with true eagerness and out of true love for Him, and to create bitterness for oneself in this path, is a status which cannot be achieved by anyone except the truthful. This is the worship which is prescribed for man. When a person performs this worship, God responds to it with something which is called His bounty; as we are taught in the Holy Qur'ān:

إِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ۝ صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ⁹³

O Allāh, guide us along Thy straight path, the path of those on whom Thou hast bestowed Thy favour and have singularized them with Thy special Grace.

⁹³ Al-Fātiḥah 1:6-7 [Publisher]

Favours upon those who are Accepted into the Service of God

It is the way of God that when He accepts service, He necessarily bestows some favour in return. Miracles and signs, which cannot be matched by other people, are also bounties of God Almighty which are bestowed upon His particular servants.

اے گرفتار ہوا در ہمہ اوقات حیات
باچنیں نفس سیہ چوں رسدت زوعونے
گرتو آں صدق بورزی کہ بورزید کلیم
عجبے نیست اگر غرق شود فرعونے⁹⁴

[Haqīqat-ul-Wahī, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 22, pp. 54-55]

Appointment of the Promised Messiah^{as} for Rejuvenation of Islam

God Almighty, observing the condition of the earth and finding it filled with disobedience, sinfulness and misguidance, has appointed me for the propagation of the truth and for the reform of the people.

It was when the thirteenth century [of the Hijra] was about to come to an end and the fourteenth was about to begin, that, under God's command, I sent out a call

⁹⁴ O thou who are caught in thy desires during thy whole life, how can thou expect help from Him while thy soul is in such darkness.

If you will practise such sincerity as was practised by Moses^{as}, it would not be a matter for wonder if a Pharaoh should be drowned.

[Publisher]

through written and verbal announcements that I am the one who was to come from God at the turn of this century for the revival of the faith, to re-establish the faith which had disappeared from the earth, to draw the world to reform and righteousness with the power bestowed by God and with the force of His hand, and to remove their errors of doctrine and conduct. Within a few years of this, it was disclosed to me plainly through revelation that I am the Messiah who, from the very beginning, had been appointed for the Muslims, and also the last Mahdī, who had been appointed by Divine decree to come at the time of the decline of Islam and the spread of error. This last Mahdī who was to receive guidance directly from God, and was to present the heavenly banquet afresh to people, and whose advent had been prophesied thirteen hundred years in advance by the Holy Prophet^{sa}, is none other than my own self.

I continued to receive so many clear revelations and Divine communication in this regard that no room was left for any doubt. Every revelation established itself firmly in my heart like a steel nail. All these Divine revelations were full of great prophecies which were fulfilled as clearly as a bright day. Their continuity and numbers and miraculous power compelled me to confess that they were the word of the same One God, Who has no associate and Whose Word is the Holy Qur'ān.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādatain, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 3-4]

Promised Messiah from Among the Muslims

I have already proved the death of the Messiah^{as} and his spiritual exaltation....Now, after the death of the Messiah^{as}, the next question is, what are the authorities contained in the Qur'ān and Aḥādīth and other sources from which it is established that the Promised Messiah will appear from among the Ummah? I will set out these authorities below, please read them with care. Hopefully, God the Compassionate will guide you.

One of the arguments which prove that the Messiah who was promised to appear in this Ummah would be from among the Muslims is this Ḥadīth set out both in *Bukhārī* and *Muslim* اَمَّاكُمْ مِنْكُمْ and اِمَامُكُمْ مِنْكُمْ

It means that he will be your Imām from among you. Since this Ḥadīth relates to Jesus^{as} and it is he who has been described in this Ḥadīth as *Hakam* and '*Adal* [Arbiter and Judge], it follows, therefore, that the word Imām also refers to him. It is true that the words 'from among you' were addressed to the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, but we know that none of them claimed to be the Promised Messiah. This, therefore, shows that the words 'from among you' are meant for someone who, in the knowledge of God Almighty, would be a substitute for the Companions and is the one referred to in the verse:

وَالْآخِرِينَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوا بِهِمْ^{ط 95}

⁹⁵ And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined

This verse shows that he will be instructed through the spiritual power of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and will, in this sense, be one of the Companions. This verse is further explained by the Ḥadīth:

لو كان الايمان معلقاً بالثريا لنالته رجل من فارس⁹⁶

Here the quality which was particularized in the Promised Messiah and Mahdī has been attributed to this man from Persia. This quality is to replenish the earth with justice after it has been filled with wrongdoing and has become empty of faith and the belief in the Unity of God. Thus this man is the Promised Messiah and Mahdī; and I am he.

Just as the prophesied eclipse of the sun and the moon in the month of Ramadan has not occurred during the time of any other person claiming to be Mahdī, likewise, during the thirteen hundred years that have elapsed since the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, no one has claimed, on the basis of Divine revelation, to be ‘the Man of Persia’ about whom the Ḥadīth says that he will bring faith down from heaven.

[Toḥfah Golarhviah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 17, pp. 114-115]

One of the authorities that show that the Promised Messiah will appear from among the Muslims, is this verse of the Holy Qur’ān:

كُنْتُمْ خَيْرَ أُمَّةٍ أُخْرِجَتْ لِلنَّاسِ⁹⁷

them.—Al-Jumu‘ah, 62:4 [Publisher]

⁹⁶ Had faith ascended to the Pleiades, it would be brought down by a man from among the Persians. [Publisher]

This means: [O Muslims] You are the best of people who have been raised to benefit mankind and to repel the mischief of all *Dajjāls* and of the Antichrist...

Every religious community is called upon to perform a particular service and has to contend against a particular enemy. It has been decreed that the Muslims would have to fight against the Antichrist. In a Ḥadīth related by Nāfe' bin 'Utbah, which is set out in *Muslim*, it is stated that the Muslims will fight the Antichrist and will be victorious over him. The Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} did not fight the Antichrist, but, according to the connotation of the verse 'And from amongst others...' the Promised Messiah and his Jamā'at were declared Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It is also worth observing that in this Ḥadīth, the Holy Prophet^{sa} specified that his Companions are those who would fight the Antichrist and he did not say that the Hebrew Messiah would fight him. The word 'descent' is used for respect and honour and indicates in this context that as in that age of turmoil, faith will ascend to the Pleiades and all spiritual leadership, learning, and instruction will fall into decline, the God of heaven will send someone whom He will have trained Himself without the intervention of earthly means, just as rain descends from heaven without the intervention of any human agency.

⁹⁷ Āl-e-Imrān, 3:111 [Publisher]

Another authority which indicates that the Promised Messiah will appear from among this same Ummah of Muḥammad^{sa}:

وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْكُمْ وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ لَيَسْتَخْلِفَنَّهُمْ
فِي الْأَرْضِ كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ⁹⁸

which means, Allāh has promised those people who believe and act righteously that He will make them successors in the earth as He made those successors who were before them.

The previous successors referred to in this verse are the successors from the people of Moses^{as} whom God had sent one after the other to establish and maintain the Law of Moses^{as}. No century was allowed to go by without the appearance of such a successor who came to revive the religion of Moses^{as}. The Holy Qur'ān indicates that there were twelve such successors and that the thirteenth was Jesus^{as}, who was the Promised Messiah under the Mosaic law. In view of the resemblance which is established by the use of the word *kamā* [just as] in this verse, it is essential that there should be a resemblance between the successors of Muḥammad^{sa} and the successors of Moses^{as}. To prove and firmly establish this resemblance, the Holy Qur'ān mentions twelve Mosaic successors, each of whom was from the people of Moses^{as} and the thirteenth was Jesus^{as}, who was the *Khātam-ul-Anbiyā'* among the people of Moses^{as}, but did not actually be-

⁹⁸ Al-Nūr 24:56 [Publisher]

long to them. Then, pointing out the resemblance between the successors of the Mosaic dispensation and the successors of the Islamic dispensation, God clearly indicated that at the end of the Islamic dispensation there would be a Messiah and twelve successors in between so that figure of 'fourteen' should also correspond. Similarly, the Promised Messiah of the Islamic dispensation appeared at the beginning of the fourteenth century, just as the Promised Messiah of the Mosaic dispensation had appeared in the fourteenth century of the Mosaic dispensation. Thus, the distance of the two Messiahs from the Founders of their respective religions is the same....

If the second Messiah who was to come was to be the same Jesus^{as}, this would contradict the Holy Qur'ān, inasmuch as the Qur'ān declares the Successors of the two dispensations to be distinct personalities, as is evident from the word *kamā* [just as]. This distinction provides a clear authority which cannot be rejected even if the whole world were to combine against it. If the same person who was the last Successor of the first dispensation was to come back, the distinction between the two dispensations would disappear and the import of the word *kamā* would be falsified. Such a thing would be contradictory to the Holy Qur'ān and is, therefore, false.

و هذا باطلٌ و كل ما يستلزم الباطل فهو باطلٌ⁹⁹

⁹⁹ This is false, and everything that leads to a false conclusion is false.
[Translator]

It is worth remembering that in the verse:

كَمَا اسْتَخْلَفَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ¹⁰⁰

the same *kamā* has been used which is employed in the verse:

كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا¹⁰¹

[Toḥfah-e-Golarhviyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in vol. 17, pp. 120-127]

Other Similarities between the Islamic and Mosaic Dispensations

According to the Holy Qur'ān, the Islamic dispensation resembles the Mosaic dispensation in respect of every vice and virtue. At one place, the Holy Qur'ān says concerning the Jews:

فَيَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ¹⁰²

And concerning the Muslims it says:

نَنْظُرْ كَيْفَ تَعْمَلُونَ¹⁰³

The meaning of both verses is that God will bestow succession and kingdom upon you and will then see whether you remain established on righteousness or not. The same words have been employed both for the Jews and the Muslims. Both are therefore covered by the same verse. Can there be clearer evidence than these two verses in which God has described some

¹⁰⁰ As He made Successors *from among those* who were before them.—Al-Nūr, 24:56 [Publisher]

¹⁰¹ As We sent a Messenger to Pharaoh.—Al-Muzzammil, 73:16 [Publisher]

¹⁰² That He may see how you act.—Al-A'rāf, 7:130 [Publisher]

¹⁰³ That We might see how you would act.—Yūnus, 10:15 [Publisher]

Muslims as Jews and has indicated that the vices committed by Jewish divines will also be committed by Muslim divines! The same is indicated in the verse:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ¹⁰⁴

All commentators are agreed that the words '*those who incurred Thy wrath*', refer to the Jews who incurred divine wrath by denying Prophet Jesus^{as}. The true Aḥādīth confirm this and the Holy Qur'ān bears witness that the Jews were cursed by Jesus^{as} and thus earned God's wrath in this very world. Thus it is established firmly that '*those who incurred Thy wrath*' means the Jews who had designed to crucify Jesus^{as}. The fact that God Almighty has taught the prayer, 'Lord, do Thou safeguard us against becoming such Jews who had designed to crucify Jesus^{as}', is a clear indication that there would appear an 'Īsā among the Muslims also. Otherwise there was no need for this prayer. Besides, when it is established that at some time Muslim divines will completely resemble Jewish divines and will thus become Jews, it would be unreasonable to assert that the Israeli Jesus^{as} would descend from heaven for the reform of such Jews. In the first place, the coming of a Prophet from outside the Muslims would break the Seal of Prophethood, and the Holy Qur'ān clearly announces that the Holy Prophet^{sa} was the Seal of the Prophets. Secondly, Muslim

¹⁰⁴ Those who have not incurred *Thy* displeasure.—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

people have been called the ‘best of people’ in the Holy Qur’ān, and it would be the height of disgrace for them that part of them should become Jews and that ‘Īsā should come from outside Islam. If it is true that the majority of the Muslim divines will at some time become Jews, that is to say, will take on the characteristics of Jews, then this also is true that for the reform of such Jews, ‘Īsā will not come from outside, but just as some individuals have been named Jews, in contrast to them, one individual will be called ‘Īsā.

It cannot be denied that both the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth have named some people from among the Muslims as Jews, as is indicated by the verse:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ¹⁰⁵

If it were not destined that some Muslims would take on the characteristics of the Jews, we would not have been taught this prayer. Ever since God has sent down revealed books, it is the Divine practice that if He forbids a people doing certain things as, for instance: do not commit adultery; do not commit theft; or do not become Jews; such commands have latent in them the prophecy that some of them would be guilty of those sins. No one can produce a single instance where God forbade a people from committing an offence and all of them refrained from committing it. Some of them necessarily become guilty of commit-

¹⁰⁵ Those who have not incurred *Thy* displeasure.—Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

ting it. For instance, God Almighty commanded the Jews not to corrupt the Torah; the consequence was that some Jews became guilty of that offence. On the contrary, nowhere in the Holy Qur'ān has God commanded the Muslims not to corrupt the Holy Qur'ān, rather it says:

﴿إِنَّا نَحْنُ نَزَّلْنَا الذِّكْرَ وَإِنَّا لَهُ لَحَافِظُونَ﴾¹⁰⁶

i.e., We have revealed the Holy Qur'ān and We shall safeguard it.

For this reason the Holy Qur'ān has been safeguarded against corruption. In short, this is the definite and established way of God that when He forbids a people from committing a vice or commands them to conform to good conduct, it means that it is within His knowledge that some of them will contravene that command. Thus, the fact that God Almighty taught the Muslims the prayer in the *Sūrah Al-Fātiḥah* that they should not become the Jews who had designed to crucify Jesus^{as}, and on account of which they incurred the wrath of God in this very life, this clearly indicates that it was decreed in God's knowledge that some of the Muslim divines will, on account of their vices and their rejection of the Messiah of the age, take on the character of the Jews. There was otherwise no need for teaching such a prayer. It is obvious that Muslim divines cannot become Jews in the sense that they should become members of the tribes of Israel and contrive to crucify Jesus son of Mary^{as}, who

¹⁰⁶ Al-Hijr 15:10 [Publisher]

passed away from this world long long ago, for neither those Jews nor Jesus^{as} is present on earth in this age. Instead it is a future event that is indicated in this verse, i.e., in the latter days a person would be raised among the Muslims in the spirit of ‘Īsā the Messiah and the Muslim divines of his age will persecute him and revile him as the Jewish divines persecuted and reviled Jesus^{as}. The true Aḥādīth show that becoming Jews in this context means that Muslim divines will develop vices and bad habits of the Jews and that, though they will be called Muslims, their hearts will be perverted and become like the hearts of the Jews who had earned Divine wrath by persecuting Jesus^{as}. Since the resemblance to the Jews will be taken by those who call themselves Muslims, is it not an insult for the Muslims that some of them should become Jews but the Messiah to reform them should come from outside?...

He who will study the Holy Qur’ān in the spirit of faith, righteousness, and justice and reflect upon it, it will become to him clear as day that the Almighty and Powerful God has put the Islamic dispensation in a position parallel to the Mosaic dispensation. He has bestowed upon them good and bad in comparison with the good and bad he bestowed on the Jews. Among the Muslims there are some who resemble the Prophets of Israel and there are others who resemble the Jews who earned Divine wrath. This might be illustrated by a splendid mansion which comprises well-furnished chambers where cultured and civilized

people sit and lounge, but the same mansion also contains toilets and lavatories. Now, if the owner of the mansion desires to construct another mansion exactly like the first one, it too would contain all the provisions that existed in the first mansion. This second mansion is the Mansion of Islam, and the first one was the Mansion of the Mosaic dispensation. The second is not in any way dependent upon the first. The Holy Qur'ān does not need the Torah, and the Muslims do not need any Israeli Prophet. Every perfect one who appears among the Muslims is nurtured in the spiritual grace of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and his revelation is a reflection of the revelation of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. This is the very point that needs to be understood. It is a pity that our opponents, who want to bring Jesus^{as} himself back to earth, do not realize that the Divine intent is to grant Islam the pride of resemblance, and not to humiliate it by sending an Israeli Prophet to reform it.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātāin, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 13-17]

Time of the Promised Messiah

The third question is whether or not it is established that the Promised Messiah should have come in our time. The following detailed arguments prove beyond any shadow of doubt that he must appear in our time.

[1] The first argument is that it is stated in *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī*—known as the most authentic book after the Holy Book of Allāh—that the Promised Messiah will come to break the cross at a time when the world

would be rife with intemperance in word and deed. It does not require an investigation to find out that hundreds of thousands have been influenced by Christianity and the country is being greatly affected by heretical teachings. Hundreds of people from every family have not only turned away from Islam but have become sworn enemies of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Hundreds of books have been published in refutation of Islam and most of them are full of abuse and vilification. When we look back in the context of this calamity, we are compelled to conclude that no century has been as harmful to Islam as the thirteenth century or the one which is now passing. Reason requires that in this time of peril, when forces of opposition have erupted in the world and the internal condition of Muslims has seriously deteriorated, some reformer should appear to repel the mischief of the cross and to purify the internal condition of Muslims. Experience of the thirteenth century has shown that it is not an ordinary task to purify the poisonous winds that are blowing fiercely and affecting sections of every town and village. This opposition to Islam and the multitude of objections raised against it is in itself not something that can be taken lightly. The earth is in turmoil at this appointed time and is forcefully throwing out its poisons. Heavenly power is needed to repel this poison because only diamond cuts diamond. All this clearly proves that this is indeed the time of the appearance of the Promised Messiah....

[2] The second argument comprises some Aḥādīth and visions of the honoured saints and great divines which indicate that the Promised Messiah and Mahdī would appear at the turn of the fourteenth century. For instance, the Ḥadīth:

¹⁰⁷ الأيات بعد المأتين

has been interpreted by many of the older and later scholars as meaning that signs would appear after two centuries of the second millennium have passed. This means that the birth of the Messiah and Mahdī, which will be a great sign, will take place in the thirteenth century and that he will make his appearance in the fourteenth century. That is why scholars and divines have held that the Promised Mahdī was bound to be born in the thirteenth century so that he could proclaim himself in the beginning of the fourteenth. Basing himself upon this and several other indications, Maulavī Nawāb Ṣiddīque Ḥassan Khān Ṣāḥib has recorded in his book *Hujaj-ul-Kirāmah* that he believed on the basis of strong evidence that the Promised Mahdī would appear at the turn of the fourteenth century...

A Ḥadīth of *Dār Quṭnī* also proves that the Promised Mahdī would appear at the turn of the fourteenth century. The Ḥadīth says:

انّ لمهدينا ايتين...

The translation of the whole Ḥadīth is: Our Mahdī has two signs which have not appeared for any Messen-

¹⁰⁷ Signs will appear after two centuries. [Translator]

ger, Prophet, or commissioned one, since the creation of heaven and earth. The signs are that in the same month of Ramaḍan, the moon shall suffer an eclipse on the first of the nights peculiar to such phenomenon, and that the sun shall suffer an eclipse on the middle of the days peculiar to these eclipses.

This means that at the time when the Mahdī will put his claim before the world and the world will reject it, this sign will appear in heaven in his support, and that this sign would be exhibited in the month of Ramadan which is the month in which the Word of God was revealed. The spiritual significance of the darkness would be that great wrong had been committed on the earth, for the one who had come from God had been deemed an impostor. This Ḥadīth clearly determines the fourteenth century as the time of the appearance of the Mahdī and provides great sign for those who deny him, inasmuch as the eclipses of the sun and the moon took place in this century.

[Toḥfah Golarhviah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 128-133]

Identification of the Promised Messiah^{as}

The next step is to prove that I am the one whose coming as the Promised Messiah was decreed for the beginning of the fourteenth century. This is proved by the fact that the eclipse of the sun and the moon has taken place at the time of my claim; and the mischief of the cross has assumed a special significance in my time. Through me God has established that the Promised Messiah was to appear from among the Muslims.

God Himself has strengthened me, so that no clergyman can stand against me in debate, and God has so overawed Christian divines that they dare not confront me. This is because God has supported me with the Holy Spirit and has appointed His angel to accompany me. Therefore, no Christian priest can confront me. These are the people who used to say that the Holy Prophet^{sa} exhibited no miracle and made no prophecy. Now they are challenged but they do not come forth. This is because God has put it in their minds that if they enter the field against me they can look forward to nothing but defeat. Just consider, who was it that stood up against the Christian clergy when the deification of the Messiah^{as} was at its height and it was alleged that the Holy Prophet^{sa} did not have the support of the Holy Spirit and his miracles and prophecies were denied? Who was it in whose support God Almighty showed such great miracles? Although hundreds of stories have been put forward which have no support, read my book *Tiryāq-ul-Qulūb* and then say honestly who it is that has shown signs and the prophecies which are proved by the testimony of hundreds of thousands of witnesses who are still living. Who is it that challenges his opponents and puts them to shame every morning by inviting them to compete with him and show if they enjoy the support of the Holy Spirit? Is there anyone from amongst the Christians and Hindūs and Āryas who can assert before me that the Holy Prophet^{sa} displayed no sign? Thus God has perfected His argument. De-

nying the truth is not the sign of honesty and integrity. God has made the truth crystal clear to every people and there is none under the sky who can compete with me with regard to the support of the Holy Spirit.

[Toḥfah Golarhviah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 148-150]

Personal Signs of the Promised Messiah^{as}

Among the arguments which prove that I am the Promised Messiah, there are some signs that are personal to the Promised Messiah. A major sign among them is that the Promised Messiah must appear in the latter days as set out in the Ḥadīth:

يكون في آخر الزمان عند تظاهر من الفتن و انقطاع من الزمن¹⁰⁸

There are two kinds of indications to prove that these are the last days in which the Messiah should appear.

The signs set out in the Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth which indicate the approach of the Day of Judgement and which have been clearly fulfilled. As, for instance, the eclipse of the sun and the moon in the month of Ramadan which is indicated in the verse:

وَجِيعَ الشَّمْسِ وَالْقَمَرِ¹⁰⁹

Then there is the discarding of camels as a means of transportation, as is clearly indicated in the verse:

وَإِذَا الْعِشَارُ عُطِّلَتْ¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁸ It will be in the latter days when tribulations will abound and the age will be approaching its end. [Publisher]

¹⁰⁹ Al-Qiyāmah, 75:10 [Publisher]

¹¹⁰ Al-Takwīr, 81:5 [Publisher]

And the multiplication of irrigation canals which is obvious from the verse:

وَإِذَا الْبَحَارُ فُجِّرَتْ ۝¹¹¹

And the continuous falling of stars as indicated in:

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ اتَّثَرَتْ ۝¹¹²

And the occurrence of famines and the spread of epidemics and the scarcity of rain as contained in:

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انْفَطَرَتْ ۝¹¹³

And a total eclipse of the sun; thus spreading darkness as stated in:

إِذَا الشَّمْسُ كُوِّرَتْ ۝¹¹⁴

And the moving of the mountains as is generally understood to be the meaning of the verse:

وَإِذَا الْجِبَالُ سُيِّرَتْ ۝¹¹⁵

And the rising of the fortunes of the people who are wild, lowly, and unacquainted with noble Islamic virtues, as is obvious from the verse:

وَإِذَا الْوُحُوشُ حُشِرَتْ ۝¹¹⁶

And the multiplication of the means of communication and travel, whereby it will become easy for people to meet one another, which is an accepted interpretation of the verse:

¹¹¹ Al-Infiṭār, 82:4 [Publisher]

¹¹² Al-Infiṭār, 82:3 [Publisher]

¹¹³ Al-Infiṭār, 82:2 [Publisher]

¹¹⁴ Al-Takwīr, 81:2 [Publisher]

¹¹⁵ Al-Takwīr, 81:4 [Publisher]

¹¹⁶ Al-Takwīr, 81:6 [Publisher]

وَإِذَا النُّفُوسُ زُوِّجَتْ ۝¹¹⁷

And publication of books, pamphlets and letters in all countries, as indicated in:

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ نُسِرَتْ ۝¹¹⁸

And the corruption of the inner condition of the divines, who are the stars of Islam, which is a clear purport of the verse:

وَإِذَا النُّجُومُ انْكَدَرَتْ ۝¹¹⁹

and the spread of innovations, errors, and all kinds of disobedience and vices, as indicated in the verse:

إِذَا السَّمَاءُ انشَقَّتْ ۝¹²⁰

All these signs of the approach of the Day of Judgement have been manifested and the world is in the grip of a great revolution...

Then there is the verse in *Sūrah Al-Mursalāt* which indicates that a great sign of the approach of the Day of Judgement is that someone should appear and with his coming the number of Messengers should be determined. This means that the last *Khalīfah* in the chain of successors in the Islamic dispensation, whose name is the Promised Messiah and the awaited Mahdī, shall make his appearance in the last days. The verse is:

وَإِذَا الرُّسُلُ أُقِيتَتْ ۝¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Al- Takwīr, 81:8 [Publisher]

¹¹⁸ Al- Takwīr, 81:11 [Publisher]

¹¹⁹ Al- Takwīr, 81:3 [Publisher]

¹²⁰ Al-Inshiqāq, 84:2 [Publisher]

i.e., the time when number of the Messengers will be determined. This means that with the appearance of the last *Khalīfah*, the number of Messengers which had been determined by Divine decree and had been hidden, shall become manifest. This verse also clearly shows that the Promised Messiah will be from among the Muslims.

[Toḥfah-e-Golarhviyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 241-244]

Resemblances between Jesus^{as} and the Promised Messiah^{as}

In the Mosaic dispensation, there were sixteen distinctions assigned to Prophet Jesus^{as}. When God Almighty brought the Mosaic dispensation to an end and established the dispensation of Muḥammad^{sa}, the All-Wise and All-Knowing designed a perfect resemblance between the beginning and the end of both these dispensations, as had been promised in the scriptures of the Prophets^{as}. First, He raised the Holy Prophet^{sa} and described him as the like of Moses^{as}, as is evident from the verse:

إِنَّا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَيْكُمْ رَسُولًا شَاهِدًا عَلَيْكُمْ
كَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ رَسُولًا ۖ¹²²

...But it was necessary that the last *Khalīfah* of the dispensation of Muḥammad^{sa} should also resemble the last *Khalīfah* of the Mosaic dispensation, so that

¹²¹ Al-Mursalāt 77:12 [Publisher]

¹²² Al-Muzzammil, 73:16 [Publisher]

the saying of God Almighty that the dispensation of Muḥammad^{sa}—with regard to both its Founder and its successors—would have a close resemblance with the Mosaic dispensation, may be fulfilled. Resemblance is always sought between the beginning and the end, for the middle period is a long one and cannot be analysed in detail. But similarity between the beginnings and the ends shows that there must also be similarity in the intervening periods, though the eye of reason may not fully comprehend it.

As I have already said, Jesus^{as} possessed sixteen religious qualities which must also be found in the last *Khalīfah* of Islam, so that a perfect resemblance may be established between the two.

The first similarity between the two is that that they are both promised. There have been thousands of saints and men of God in Islam, but the advent of not even one of them was promised. It was only the advent of the one who was to come with the name of the Messiah that was promised. In the same way, before Jesus^{as} there was no Prophet in Israel whose advent was promised, only the Messiah's advent had been promised.

The second similarity is the loss of kingdom. There is no doubt that a short while before the advent of Jesus son of Mary^{as}, the Israelite kingdom had been lost. In the same way, before the birth of the last Messiah, the Islamic kingdom in India had disappeared from this

country due to all sorts of misconduct, and the British kingdom had been established in its place.

The third similarity is that in the time of the first Messiah^{as} the Jews had become divided into many sects and were in need of an Arbiter who would decide between them. Likewise, at the time of this last Messiah, the Muslims have become divided into many sects.

The fourth similarity is that just as the first Messiah^{as} was not commissioned to fight with the sword, the last Messiah has also not be commissioned to fight with the sword. In fact there can be no question of such a thing when the age has shown that no heart can be convinced with the sword and no civilized person now takes up the sword for the sake of religion....

Fifth: In the time of the first Messiah^{as}, the character of the Jews had become thoroughly corrupt. Their divines in particular were deceitful, worshippers of the world, and greedy for worldly gain and honour. The same is the case with common Muslims and the majority of the Muslim divines in the time of the last Messiah. This needs no detailed exposition.

Sixth: The first Messiah^{as} was raised under the Roman Caesar. This distinction is shared by the last Messiah, in that I too have been raised under Caesar—only this Caesar is better than the Caesar who ruled in the time of the Messiah^{as}

Seventh: The Christian faith ultimately penetrated into the people of Caesar. I too partake of this inasmuch as I perceive that both in Europe and America great interest is taken in my claim and arguments. Hundreds of journals and newspapers have published my claim and the reasons in support thereof. Some of them have said things in my support which it is difficult for a Christian to say, so much so that they have clearly said concerning me that to them I appear to be true...

Eighth: A comet had appeared in the time of Messiah^{as} and the same comet has appeared again in my time. Some European newspapers have referred to this as evidence that the time of the advent of the Messiah is near.

Ninth: When Jesus the Messiah^{as} was put upon the cross, the sun suffered an eclipse. Likewise, when I was denied, not only did the sun, but the moon also suffered an eclipse in the month of Ramadan, and not once but—in accordance with the Ḥadīth—twice. These eclipses were mentioned in the Gospels, the Holy Qur'ān, as well as Aḥādīth (e.g. in *Dār Quṭnī*).

Tenth: After the persecution of Jesus^{as} by the Jews, there was a severe outbreak of the plague among them. Likewise, there has been a severe outbreak of the plague in my time.

Eleventh: The Jewish divines tried to condemn Jesus^{as} as a rebel. He was persecuted and the Jews sought to have him sentenced to death. The Divine decree has

associated me with him in this regard as well. I too was charged with conspiracy to murder and attempts were made to show that I was a rebel. This was the case in which Maulavī Abū Sa'īd Muḥammad Ḥus-sain of Batāla appeared as a witness against me.

Twelfth: When Jesus^{as} was put upon the cross, a thief was also put upon the cross at the same time. I have been associated with him in this incident as well. On the day that I was discharged from the case of conspiracy to murder, in accordance with a categorical prophecy that I had published widely in advance, a Christian thief had also been produced in the same court. This thief was a member of the Christian Salvation Army who had stolen some money. He was sentenced to a three months' imprisonment, and not to death, like the companion of the first Messiah^{as}.

Thirteenth: When Jesus^{as} was produced before Pilate and it was demanded that he should be sentenced to death, Pilate declared that he had not found any sin in Jesus^{as} which should make him deserving of death. In the same way, Captain Douglas, the District Magistrate, in answer to one of my questions told me that he did not charge me with any offence.

It appears that Captain Douglas was more steadfast and had greater regard for justice than Pilate, inasmuch as in the end Pilate exhibited cowardice and became afraid of the vicious divines of the Jews, but Captain Douglas showed no such fear.... My Jamā'at and I will always remember these good qualities of

Captain Douglas and his name will always be mentioned with honour till the end of time.

Fourteenth: Jesus^{as}, having been born without a father, was not an Israelite and yet he was the last Prophet in the Mosaic dispensation who appeared in the fourteenth century after Moses^{as}. I too am not one of the Quraish and have been raised in the fourteenth century after the Holy Prophet^{sa} and have appeared at the end.

Fifteenth: The world in the time of Jesus^{as} had taken on a new aspect. Roads had been built, the mailing system had been regulated, the military structure had been improved, facilities had been created for travellers, and the system of justice had been made much more transparent. Similarly, in my time, life has become much more comfortable. Railways have also been built, an indication of which is given in the Holy Qur'ān. I leave the rest to the reader to understand.

Sixteenth: Jesus^{as} resembled Adam^{as} as he was born without a father. I also resemble Adam^{as} as I was born a twin. Muḥy-ud-Dīn Ibn-e-‘Arabī has recorded that the last *Khalīfah* in Islam would be of Persian origin (i.e., would be a Mughal) and would be born a twin. A girl would be born first and then he would be born. That is how I was born, on a Friday morning. A girl was first and I was born after her. I am not aware of the source upon which this prophecy of Ibn-e-‘Arabī, which has been fulfilled, is based, but it is to be found in his books to this day.

These are the sixteen resemblances between me and the Messiah^{as}. It is obvious that had my claim been the product of my own imagination, there would not have been so many resemblances between the Messiah son of Mary^{as} and myself. Denial of truth has, from ancient times, been the characteristic of those who have not been blessed with good fortune, but my denial by the Maulavīs of this age is simply beyond comprehension. I am the one who has appeared right on time and for whom the sun and the moon were eclipsed in the month of Ramadan in accordance with the prophecies of the Qur'ān, the Ḥadīth, the Bible and other Prophets^{as}. I am the one in whose time, according to the prophecies of all the Prophets^{as} and of the Holy Qur'ān, the plague broke out in this country in an extraordinary manner. I am the one in whose time the pilgrimage was stopped in accordance with true Aḥādīth. I am the one in whose time the comet appeared which has appeared in the time of the Messiah son of Mary^{as}. I am the one in whose time the advent of the railway caused camels to be discarded as a means of transportation. The time is approaching, indeed it is very near, when the railway will run between Mecca and Medina and all those camels will be discarded which have performed this blessed journey for thirteen hundred years. Then will be fulfilled this Ḥadīth of *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*:

ليتركن القلاص فلا يسعى عليها

which means that in the time of the Messiah camels will be discarded and no one will travel by them. I am

the one at whose hands hundreds of signs have been shown. Is there anyone alive who can compete with me in the exhibition of signs and defeat me? I call to witness God, in Whose hand is my life, that more than two hundred thousand signs have been exhibited at my hands. Approximately ten thousand people or perhaps even more have seen the Holy Prophet^{sa} in their dreams and he confirmed the truth of my claim. Some well-known persons in this country who had experience of visions and the number of each of whose followers exceeded three hundred thousand, were informed in their dreams that I had been sent by God....

Despite all this testimony and miracles and extraordinary signs, the Maulavīs call me false and it was necessary that they should do so, so that the prophecy implied in the verse:

غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ¹²³

may be fulfilled. At the root of all this opposition is the stupid desire of the Maulavīs that all the signs of the Promised Messiah, which they find set out in their books and which are a mixed bundle of truth and falsehood, should be fulfilled; and that no one claiming to be the Messiah or Mahdī should ever be accepted if he is not borne out by each of the many Aḥādīth they possess, although such a proposition has always remained an impossibility. The signs which

¹²³ Those who have not incurred *Thy* displeasure.— Al-Fātiḥah, 1:7 [Publisher]

the Jews had announced and formulated in their books concerning the advent of Jesus^{as} were not fulfilled. Then the same wretched people formulated a number of signs for the Holy Prophet Muḥammad^{sa}, and only a few of them were fulfilled. For instance, they had imagined that this last Prophet would be from among the Israelites...but the Holy Prophet^{sa} appeared from among the Ishmaelites. Had God Almighty so willed, He could have recorded in the Torah that the name of that Prophet would be Muḥammad and that the name of his father would be 'Abdullāh and that the name of his grandfather would be 'Abdul Muṭṭalib and that he would be born in Mecca and would migrate to Medina. But God did not record all this, because such prophecies have to be the test of faith. It has been specified for the Promised Messiah in advance that he would be an Arbiter between the different sects of Islam. Now, when each sect has a collection of its own Aḥādīth and how can it be possible for him to conform to the ideas of everyone? If he confirms the Ahl-e-Ḥadīth, the Ḥanafīs would be disgruntled, and if he confirms the Ḥanafīs, the Shāfi'īs would be annoyed, and the Shī'ās would insist that he should have appeared in accordance with their doctrine. How could he please everyone? The very word 'Arbiter' indicates that he would arrive at a time when all sects would have departed from the truth to some degree. In these circumstances, it would be a great folly for each sect to test him on the touchstone of its own Aḥādīth. The right course

would be to take advantage of those signs and conditions which are fulfilled in his time and to reject the others as false and human fabrications. This is the course that was followed by the righteous Jews who became Muslims. They accepted those traditions of the Jews which confirmed the truth of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and rejected the rest as false. Had not this been done, neither the Prophethood of Jesus^{as} nor that of the Holy Prophet^{sa} could have been established satisfactorily for the Jews. Those of them who became Muslims had to reject hundreds of false Jewish traditions. When they found that some of the conditions laid down had been fulfilled and that there was an ocean of Divine support for the Holy Prophet^{sa}, they took advantage of those traditions which had been fulfilled. Otherwise, not one of them would have become a Muslim...

Now comes the question of my claim. This is supported by so many reasons that unless a person is altogether without shame, he has no way open to him other than to accept my claim in the same way as he has accepted the advent of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Are these arguments not enough proof of my claim that the Holy Qur'ān has given so many signs and indications concerning me that it has virtually specified my name, and the Aḥādīth mention *Kad'ah* as the name of my village. The Aḥādīth also show that the Promised Messiah would be born in the thirteenth century and would appear in the fourteenth. *Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī* gives my full description. With regard to the first

Messiah^{as}, his great centre is described as in the East, i.e., India. It is also related in the Aḥādīth that the Promised Messiah will appear East of Damascus; and Qādiān is to the East of Damascus. The following signs and conditions should be enough for a God-fearing person to accept my claim:

The eclipse of the sun and the moon occurred in the month of Ramaḍān after the announcement of my claim, but people rejected this sign; the plague spread over the country; the railway was started in accordance with the prophecies in the Aḥādīth and the Qur'ān; camels were discarded; the Pilgrimage was stopped; the time came for the spread of the doctrine of the cross; hundreds of signs were shown at my hands; the time of my appearance was appointed by the Prophets^{as}; I was raised at the beginning of the century; thousands of pious people saw dreams confirming my claim; the Holy Prophet^{sa} and the Holy Qur'ān announced that the Promised Messiah would appear from among the Muslims; I have been accorded the support of God Almighty; approximately two hundred thousand people have made covenant of Bai'at with me and have become righteous and pure-hearted; the Christian faith has been shaken in my time so much so that the magic of the Trinity is melting like snow; Muslims have gone into decline having been divided into many sects; the world has undergone a revolutionary change in which innovation, idolatry, drunkenness, illicit sex, dishonesty, and lying have become rife; in every aspect this world has

undergone a tremendous change; according to the testimony of every wise person the world needs a reformer; my victory against everyone through miraculous writings and heavenly signs and the fulfilment of hundreds of thousands of Divine prophecies in my support.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādatain, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 30-41]

If I am in error in claiming to be the Promised Messiah, then why don't you try to make the Promised Messiah you have in mind descend from heaven in these very days, for I am here and he for whom you are waiting is nowhere to be seen. My claim can only be effectively refuted if he descends from heaven and I am proved to be false. If you are indeed truthful, you should supplicate all together that the Messiah son of Mary^{as} should soon be seen descending from heaven. If you are indeed in the right, your prayer will be heard, for the prayers of the righteous are accepted in contrast to the prayers of the false. But you may be certain that this prayer of yours will not be accepted as you are in error. The Messiah has come but you have failed to recognize him. Your vain hope will never be fulfilled; this age will pass and no one from among you will see the Messiah descending from heaven.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, p. 179]

Do remember that the person who was to descend has come at his proper time and all prophecies have been fulfilled. The books of all the Prophets^{as} indicate this

age...After all these signs, he who rejects me rejects all Prophets^{as} and not me alone, and fights God Almighty. It would have been better for him that he had not been born.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātāin, Rūhānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 24-25]

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُصَلِّي عَلَى رَسُولِهِ الْكَرِيمِ¹²⁴

***A Plea in the name of Allāh, the Glorious
and the Lord of Honour, to Religious
Leaders, Divines, and Righteous People
of Punjāb and India.***

O leaders of the faith and Allāh's righteous servants, in order to do away with all mischief and disorder, it is incumbent on you to pay attention to a request that I am submitting to you in the name of Allāh the Glorious, for you possess understanding and insight and you look at things not by conjecture but with the help of Divine light. Although a matter of such importance, which involves the welfare of all Muslims and would eradicate a great dissension would not seem to require an oath, but there are some people who prefer to remain silent on account of some personal consideration, or because they think that to testify to the truth will displease the people, while it is also sinful to lie. What they do not understand is that concealing a testimony is also a sin. Therefore, in order to attract

¹²⁴ In the name of Allāh, the Gracious, the Merciful. We praise Him and call down His blessings on His Noble Messenger^{sa}. [Publisher]

the attention of such people, it has become necessary to call for their testimony on oath.

O leaders of the faith, the task which I urge you to perform in the name of Allāh, glorified be His name, is that at a time of error and disorder and at the beginning of the fourteenth century, God Almighty has sent this humble one as a Reformer for the reformation of the people. As the great evil of this century, which has done great harm to Islam, was the mischief of the Christian ministers, God Almighty has named this humble one the Promised Messiah... I was sent at the beginning of the fourteenth century and God has furnished me with a heavenly weapon whereby I should break the religion of the cross, but it is a pity that the short-sighted divines of this country have not accepted me and have put forward silly excuses, which have been repelled from every point of view... Allāh, the Glorious has shown many signs in testament of my claim. He has caused the eclipses of the sun and the moon in the month of Ramadan to testify to the truth of my claim, and has given me victory against my opponents in a miraculous manner in every field of contest. He has also shown many other signs which are set out in detail in *Sirāj-e-Munīr* and other books. Despite the testimony of the Qur'ān and the Aḥādīth and the testimony of reason and heavenly signs, my cruel opponents did not refrain from their hostility and still continue to deny me with the help of all kinds of imposture. Therefore, for the sake of carrying the matter to a definitive conclusion, I have

thought of another plan, hoping that God Almighty will bless it, and this dissension which has created fierce hostility between thousands of Muslims might be set at rest.

The plan is that all Mashā'ikh¹²⁵, mendicants, divines and righteous ones in Punjāb and India be entreated in the name of Allāh, glorified be His name, that they should supplicate before Him with regard to me and my claim and seek guidance from Him. Then, if the majority of their revelations and visions and true dreams, which shall be published on oath should bear out that this humble one is a liar and an impostor, then everyone should hold me as a rejected one, a humiliated one, an accursed one, an impostor and a liar; and they may curse me as much as they like and no sin shall be upon them. In such case it would be incumbent upon every believer to keep away from me. By this means my Jamā'at and I would be easily destroyed. But if the majority of the revelations and visions and true dreams should indicate that I am from God and my claim is true, then it would be incumbent upon every God-fearing person to follow me and to refrain from calling me a *Kāfir* and a liar. Everyone has to die one day. Thus even if one encounters worldly humiliation in accepting the truth, it is much better than facing humiliation in the hereafter. Therefore, I approach all the leaders of the faith and the righteous ones of Punjāb and India and put them on

¹²⁵ Religious leaders. [Publisher]

oath in the name of Allāh, the Glorious, for Whose name's sake every faithful one should be ready to offer any sacrifice, that they should supplicate the Divine concerning me for at least twenty-one days, unless something is disclosed to them sooner than that, and they should seek to learn from God the truth with regard to me whether I am a liar or am from Him. Again and again I ask the leaders of the faith, in the name of Allāh, that they should, for the sake of removing this dissension, supplicate for twenty-one days unless the truth is disclosed to them earlier. I know for certain that it is not the way of the righteous to not pay attention to a request made in the name of God Almighty, and I appreciate that every pure-hearted one and everyone who is fearful of the glory of God, upon hearing the oath will certainly pay attention to my plea. When this testimony has been classified, that which is supported by preponderance will be considered as being from Allāh. If in truth I am a liar and a *Dajjāl*, it is a great misfortune for the Muslims that in this age when there is a deluge of disorder and religious innovations and tribulations, a *Dajjāl* should have appeared at the turn of the fourteenth century instead of a Reformer and a *Mujaddid*.

It should be remembered that every person, whom a group of Muslims possessing insight considers to be righteous and pure-hearted, has been addressed by me in this announcement. Those who have not a great reputation in this respect and are considered of lower rank are not so regarded by me, for it is possible that

in the sight of God Almighty they might be better than those who are better known. In the same way, I do not consider righteous women inferior in comparison with men. It is possible that some of them may be more righteous than some well-known righteous men. It will be necessary that every person who puts down a revelation or a vision or a dream concerning me, should send me a written statement on oath, so that all such testimonies can be collected in one place and published for the benefit of seekers after truth. This scheme will, God willing, be of great benefit for the servants of God and the hearts of the Muslims shall be comforted and delivered from trial by the volume of testimony. It appears from the Aḥādīth that the Mahdī of the latter days will first be rejected as *Kāfir* and people will turn against him and will revile him, but in the end the righteous servants of God Almighty will be informed of his truth through dreams and revelations and other heavenly signs will also appear. Then the divines and clerics of the time will accept him willy-nilly. O dear and respected ones, for the sake of God, turn to the Knower of the Unseen; I call you in the name of Allāh, glorified be His name, to accede to my request and not to reject it, as I have put you on oath in the name of the Mighty and the Lord of Majesty.

عزیزانِ مے وہم صد بار سوگند
 بروئے حضرت دادار سوگند
 کہ درکارم جواب از حق بگوئید
 بہ محبوب دل ابرار سوگند¹²⁶

لهذا ما اردنا لازالة الدّجى۔ والسلام على من اتبع الهدى۔¹²⁷

Plea made by the humble servant of God
 Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān,
 District Gurdāspūr, Punjāb, July 15, 1897.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 2, pp. 443-451]

Blessings upon Those who Accept the Promised Messiah^{as}

Obviously, it is very clear that those who have accepted this humble one as the Promised Messiah are secure against every danger and will be accounted as deserving several kinds of merit and reward together with the strengthening of their faith.

This is because, first of all they thought well of a brother and did not declare him an impostor or a liar and did not admit into their hearts any evil doubt con-

¹²⁶ Dear ones, I put you on oath a hundred times in the name of the Lord of the universe and in the name of the Beloved of the pure-hearted that you should seek from God a reply in my matter. [Publisher]

¹²⁷ This is what I have intended for dispelling the darkness. Peace be on him who follows the guidance. [Publisher]

cerning him. They are, therefore, deserving of the merit which is earned by those who think well of a brother.

Secondly, they did not fear people's reproaches in the matter of accepting the truth, nor did they yield to egoistic passions. They have, therefore, become deserving of merit in that, having heard the call of a Divinely inspired Caller, and having considered it as a call to the truth, they accepted his message and were not held back by any obstacle.

Third, having accepted the one who appeared in fulfilment of a prophecy, they have been freed of all bothersome thoughts which are generated by a long period of waiting and end up in the loss of faith due to continuous disappointment. These fortunate people have not only been delivered from such risk but, their faith is further strengthened and their traditional belief assumes a sense of true knowledge for they have seen a Divine sign and the fulfilment, before their very eyes, of a prophecy of God's Messenger^{sa}. They have been delivered of all anxiety that invades the hearts in the matter of prophecies that just do not find fulfilment.

Fourthly, having believed in one sent by God Almighty they have been rescued from Divine wrath and displeasure which pursues the disobedient ones who have nothing to do but contradict and deny.

Fifthly, they have become deserving of the graces and blessings which descend upon the sincere ones who,

out of goodwill towards a claimant, accept the one who comes from God Almighty.

These are the benefits which, by the grace of God, shall be bestowed on the fortunate people who have accepted this humble one. But those who do not accept me are deprived of all this good fortune. Their fear that in the case of acceptance they would harm their faith is baseless. I cannot understand how this could do any harm to their faith. The faith would only be harmed if I had asked them to follow a new teaching contrary to the teaching of Islam; for instance, if I had declared unlawful that which is lawful or had declared lawful that which is unlawful, or had changed anything in respect of the fundamental doctrines upon which salvation depends, or if I had added anything to or subtracted anything from the prescribed forms of worship, like Fasting or Prayer or Pilgrimage or payment of Zakat. If I had increased the number of Prayers from five to ten or had reduced them to two, or had prescribed Fast for two months instead of one, or had reduced the period to less than a month, that would certainly have done harm and might have amounted to denial of the faith. But when I repeatedly affirm, ‘Brothers! I have not brought a new faith or a new teaching. I am one of you and am a Muslim like you. For us Muslims there is no book other than the Holy Qur’ān, which we should follow and direct others to follow; and we have no guide or leader except the *Khatm-ul-Mursalīn* [Seal of the Messengers], Aḥmad of Arabia^{sa}, whom we should follow and

should direct others to follow. In such case, what apprehension can a devout Muslim have in accepting my claim which is based on Divine revelation?

Assuming that the revelation received by me were not true and I was in error in interpreting and understanding that which I was commanded, what harm would come upon him who believed in me, for he would not have believed in anything which unfavourably affects his faith. If, during our lifetime, Jesus son of Mary^{as} was to actually descend bodily from heaven, then:

دل ما شاد و چشم ما روشن¹²⁸

I and my Community would be the first to accept him....But, in the contrary case, there is no way of saving one's faith. If, until the end of their lives, no one is seen descending from heaven and they are instead faced with their own journey to the hereafter, what doubts would assail their minds and what apprehensions would they entertain in the matter of the prophecy of the Holy Prophet^{sa}? It is not unlikely that such doubts might even destroy one's faith, for according to the Bible and the Aḥādīth, this is the time of the appearance of the Messiah. That is why many of the righteous ones, who had experience of visions, had specified the beginning of the fourteenth century as the time of the appearance of the Messiah.

[Izāla-e-Auhām Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 186-189]

¹²⁸ My heart is overjoyed and my eyes are lit up with delight.
[Publisher]

***Can the Reviling and the Enmity of the
People Destroy Him who is from God?***

تا دل مرد خدا نامد بدرد

بچ قوے را خدا رسوا نکرد¹²⁹

It appears to be a matter of destiny that the ill-wishers among the people can always find some excuse to give expression to their hidden rancour. My opponents have found a new pretence for reviling me. Having misconstrued an announcement of mine, they have given out as if I am bitterly opposed to the Sultan of Turkey and his government and desire their decline, and that I flatter the British outrageously and pray constantly for the glory of the British government. It appears that much publicity has been given to these ideas in the greater part of the Punjāb and India by means of announcements filled with false accusations and some extracts from my announcement have been misquoted to deceive the populace. Thus efforts have been made to incite and inflame ignorant people. I have no power to silence the forgers and liars, nor is it open to me to compete with them in their abuse and vilification and derision. However, it appears to be proper that I should commit their wrongful abuse to the jealousy of God Almighty and should frustrate their true purpose, which is to deceive the masses. This is the object that I have in mind in making this announcement.

¹²⁹ Till the heart of a Man of God is in travail, God does not humiliate a people. [Publisher]

Every reasonable and good-natured Muslim who, on account of his innate ability, is ready to accept a true statement, should listen carefully that I have no rancour even against the lowest Muslim, let alone that I should entertain rancour against a person under whose protecting rule millions of Muslims lead their lives and to whom God Almighty has committed the protection of His holy sites. I have never discussed the person or the circumstances of the Sultan, nor is it my purpose to do so now. Indeed, Allāh the Glorious is aware that I have a better opinion of the present Sultan than I had of his forefathers. It is true, however, that in my past announcements I have said certain things about some influential and corrupt members and ministers of the Turkish government, on the basis of the God-given light and intelligence and revelation which has been bestowed upon me, and the contemplation of their dangerous implications troubles and pains my heart. That writing of mine, contrary to what the evil-minded ones have imagined, was not based on any personal ill-will, but proceeded from the fountain of light which Divine grace has bestowed upon me. If my narrow-minded opponents had not been bent upon thinking ill of me, they would have realized that the true well-wishing of the Sultan did not demand that they should have resolved to abuse me as is the wont of people of low caste. Instead, keeping in mind the verse:

وَلَا تَقْفُ مَا نَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ¹³⁰

and reminding themselves of the verse:

إِنَّ بَعْضَ الظُّلُمِ إِثْمٌ¹³¹

they should have expressed their sympathy for the Sultan through sincere supplication for him. The only purpose of my announcement was that the Turks should adopt the ways of purity and righteousness, for nothing is so effective in holding back heavenly decree and torment as piety, repentance and righteous conduct. But the foolish well-wishers of the Sultan started reviling me, and some of them said: 'Is the Sultan guilty of all sins and is Europe so holy and pure that no prophecy is made in respect of its chastisement?' They do not understand that for the punishment of disbelievers because of their disobedience and idol-worship and deification of human beings, God Almighty has appointed another world which will be encountered after death. It is not the practice of God Almighty to subject to chastisement in this very world people who do not believe in Him, except in cases when they transgress all limits in their sinfulness and are accounted tyrants and cruel and mischief-makers in the estimation of God, as the mischievous people of Noah^{as}, Lot^{as}, and Pharaoh brought punishment upon themselves by their prolonged misconduct. But God does not leave the

¹³⁰ And follow not that of which thou hast no knowledge.—Banī Isrā'īl, 17:37 [Publisher]

¹³¹ Suspicion in some cases is a sin.—Al-Hujurāt, 49:13 [Publisher]

chastisement of the Muslims for their misconduct for the other world. The Muslims are admonished in this very world for even their slight offences. In the estimation of God Almighty, they are like children whose mother rebukes them at every step for the sake of their proper upbringing. God Almighty, out of His love, desires that they should depart this world in a state of purity. These are the things that I had explained to the Turkish Vice-Consul in good faith; but alas! the foolish Muslims have pulled them out of their context. They are like the heirs of a person concerning whom an expert physician, who is well-versed in diagnosis, expresses the view in complete good faith that some kind of ulcer is growing in his stomach and if it is not operated upon immediately it will put his life in serious danger; and hearing this they are wroth with the physician and try to kill him, but neglect the ulcer altogether until it grows and spreads through the stomach and puts an end to the life of the patient. This is the case with these people, who, in their own estimation, are well-wishers of the Sultan.

Then also ponder that while I am the person who claims to be the Promised Messiah concerning whom the Holy Prophet^{sa} has said: 'He will be your Imām and *Khalīfah*, and there is for him the greeting of peace from God and His Prophet^{sa}, and his enemy would be accursed and his friend would be the friend of God, and he will be an Arbiter for the whole world and will be just in all his sayings and doings.' Then

was it the way of righteousness that hearing my claim and witnessing my signs and observing my proofs they should have reviled me and treated me with derision? Have signs not appeared? Has divine support not been manifested? Have not the times and the seasons been ascertained which had been stated in the Aḥādīth? Why then have I been mistreated with such daring? If there was still some doubt concerning my claim or there was some suspicion with regard to my arguments and signs, they should have tried to remove these doubts with meekness, goodwill and fear of God. But instead of research and investigation they reviled me and cursed me so much that they exceeded even the Shiites. Was it not possible that what I had stated with regard to the inner machinery of the Turkish government might be true, and that there might be elements in the Turkish government which would prove treacherous at a time of trial?

My opponents should reflect in their hearts that if I am the Promised Messiah, can it be permissible that, for the sake of a mere monarch, they should revile and curse one whom the Holy Prophet^{sa} had described as one of his arms and whom he had sent the greeting of peace and whom he called the Arbiter, the Judge, the Imām and the Vicegerent of God? Let them restrain their anger and reflect, not for my sake but for the sake of Allāh and His Messenger^{sa}, whether such treatment of such a claimant was proper? I do not wish to enlarge upon this because my case against you is pending in heaven. If I am the same person

who had been promised through the holy lips of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, then you have sinned, not against me but against God. Had it not been mentioned in the Aḥādīth that he will be persecuted and cursed, you would not have dared to persecute me as you have done, but it was necessary that all that was destined and decreed by God and which is still to be found in your books should be fulfilled, and that you should be proved guilty. You read those books and then, by continuing to declare me a *kāfir* and cursing me, you affirm that **you are the evil divines** and their ilk who were to declare the Mahdī a *Kāfir* and oppose the Messiah.

I have invited you time and again to come to me so that your doubts may be removed, but none of you has come forward. I invited everyone to a final decision but no one paid any attention. I suggested that you should supplicate to God and beseech Him with tears so that He may disclose the truth to you, but you did nothing and persisted in your denial. Truly has God said concerning me:

دنیا میں ایک نذیر آیا۔ پر دنیا نے اُس کو قبول نہیں کیا۔ لیکن خدا سے
قبول کرے گا اور بڑے زور اور حملوں سے اس کی سچائی ظاہر کر دے گا۔¹³²

Is it possible that a person should be true and yet should be destroyed? Is it possible that a person

¹³² A warner came into the world and the world did not accept him, but God will accept him and will proclaim his truth with powerful assaults. [Publisher]

should be from God and should be ruined? O ye people, fight not God. This is an affair which God has designed for your sake and for the sake of your faith, so do not lay obstacles before it. You might stand before the lightening but you have not the strength to confront God. If all this had been man's doing, none of your attacks would have been needed. God Himself would have destroyed me. Alas! Heaven is bearing witness and you do not hear; the earth is crying out: **One is needed, one is needed**, and you pay no attention! O unfortunate people! arise and see that in this time of distress, Islam has been trodden underfoot and has been maligned like criminals. It has been counted among liars and has been written down among unholy ones. Then would not God's jealousy be aroused at such a time? Understand then that heaven is drawing close and the days are near when every ear shall hear the affirmation:

133 **انا الموجود**

We have suffered a lot at the hands of the disbelievers and now God also desires to show something. Do not deliberately invite the wrath of God. Have you not perceived the beginning of the century of which fourteen years have already passed? Has the eclipse of the sun and the moon not taken place before your eyes? Has the prophecy concerning the appearance of the comet not been fulfilled? Have you received no intimation of the dreadful earthquake, which came in

¹³³ I am present. [Publisher]

these very days according to the prophecy of Jesus^{as} and ruined many towns? It had been prophesied that that would be the time of the appearance of the Promised Messiah. Have you not witnessed the sign concerning Ātham which was fulfilled according to the prophecy of our lord and master, the Messenger^{sa} of Allāh, which had also been announced seventeen years in advance in the *Brāhīn-e-Aḥmadiyyah*? Have you not yet heard the prophecy concerning Lekh Rām? Has anyone ever seen such a manifest sign as that regarding Lekh Rām, which was shown after the contest had been announced to millions of people—like a wrestling match—and had been circulated through hundreds of announcements and newspapers? Do you not feel ashamed before God, Who, observing your sorrow and grief of the thirteenth century, came to your support in the very beginning of the fourteenth? Was it not inevitable that God's promises should be fulfilled at their proper time? Seeing all this, what has happened to you and what has sealed up your hearts? O people of crooked hearts! God would give you every satisfaction if your hearts were clean. He can draw you [to Himself] if you are ready to be drawn. Look at the age, and the needs that Islam is confronted with. Does your heart not testify that this is the time for God to show His mercy? There is eagerness in heaven for the guidance of mankind, and the case of the Unity of God is now under hearing before the One God. But the blind of this age continue to be heedless. The heavenly dispensation has no honour in

their estimation. Would that their eyes could open and they could see how all kinds of signs are descending and heavenly support is being proclaimed and light is spreading. Blessed are those who perceive it.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13 , pp. 325-331]

Testament

Allāh, the Lord of Honour and Glory has said:

قُلْ مَا يَعْزُبُ عَنْ رَبِّي لَوْلَا دُعَاؤُكُمْ¹³⁴

Tell them, what would my Lord care for you if you do not worship Him and do not remain absorbed in supplications.

Friends! may God Almighty have mercy on you. You will remember that approximately nine months ago, I announced the revelation that was vouchsafed to me in *Al-Hakam* and *Al-Badr*—which are published from Qādiān:

عَفَبِ الدِّيَارُ مَجْلُهَا وَمَقَامُهَا

This means that this country will be destroyed by Divine chastisement. There will be no security in permanent residences or in temporary dwellings.

This is an indication that the plague would spread everywhere and its impact will be severe....and I see that the time is drawing near. Just now at 4.00 a.m. I have seen painful deaths in a vision and heard strange and heart-rending cries. When I woke up I was reciting the revelation:

¹³⁴ Al-Furqān, 25:78 [Publisher]

موتا موتی لگ رہی ہے۔¹³⁵

I have immediately started writing this announcement while a part of the night is still left. Friends! arise and become alert, for a time of great turmoil has arrived for the people of this age. There is no vessel, other than righteousness, to cross this river. A believer should, at a time of fear, lean towards God, as there is no peace without Him. Make your own atonement through crying and supplicating. Make your own sacrifice by devoting yourselves to the truth. Carry your own burden with the help of complete righteousness. Our God is Merciful and Compassionate. His wrath is averted from those who weep before the time of chastisement, and not when they behold the corpses of the dead. He has the power to avert a prophecy of chastisement from those who fear Him....Work righteously and hope for the mercy of God. Move with your full strength towards God Almighty, and if you cannot do this, drag yourselves willy-nilly to the door of His pleasure, and if you cannot do even that then seek your revival from spiritual death through charity and almsgiving. These are hard days and the wrath of God is aflame in heaven. Today you cannot achieve your purpose with empty words and boasting. Bring about such change in yourselves and tread along the path of righteousness so that the Merciful and the Compassionate should be pleased with you. Let your private chambers be filled with the remem-

¹³⁵ Death is busy on all sides. [Publisher]

brance of God. Remove the rust of impurities from your hearts. Avoid rancour, miserliness and evil talk. Before you are overtaken by the time which would afflict people with insanity, be madly absorbed in your anxious entreaties. Most unfortunate are the people who consider faith to mean only the dexterity and adroitness of the tongue, while their hearts are dark and impure and they are worms of the world. If you care for yourselves, be not like them. Most unfortunate is the person who casts not a glance at his sinful ego and, because of his evil-smelling bigotry, reviles others. He is doomed to ruin. Partake wholly of righteousness and bear the full burden of the fear of God and be constant in supplication so that you may be shown mercy....

Listen, I have discharged my duty and I have warned you before the onset of difficult times.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 515-517]

As my mission is to invite and propagate, I make it clear once again, calling God to witness, that He has disclosed to me through His revelation that His ire has been aroused on earth, for the majority of people have become so sunk in sinfulness and worship of the world that they have no faith left in God Almighty. And he who has been sent by Him for the reform of people is mocked at and their mocking and derision have exceeded all bounds. Therefore, God announces that He will fight them and will attack them in such manner as they cannot conceive of, for such is their

love of falsehood that they have sought to trample the truth underfoot. God says: I am now determined to safeguard My poor Jamā'at against the attacks of these wild beasts and to display manifold signs in support of the truth. And He says: **A Warner came into the world and the world did not accept him; but God will accept him and will establish his truth through powerful assaults.**

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, p. 518]

God Almighty says: Save yourselves by doing good before the **dreadful day** which will bring about instant destruction. He says that He is with those who do good and shun evil. He has addressed me in the words: My grace has approached thee, i.e., the time has come that thou might be fully recognized. Truth has arrived and falsehood has vanished.

To sum up, the purpose of the signs that have appeared and will appear is that people should shun evil and should recognize the Messenger of God who is among them. Dear ones, quickly shun every evil, for the day of being seized is near. Whoever does not discard associating partners with God will be seized. Whoever is involved in disobedience and impurity will be seized. Whoever has exceeded the bounds in his worship of the world and is wholly occupied with worldly concerns will be seized. Whoever denies the existence of God will be seized. Whoever reviles the Holy Prophets and Messengers of God and does not desist will be seized. Beware! I have warned you to-

day. The earth hears and so does heaven that whoever abandons the truth and inclines to mischief and whoever renders the earth impure with his vices will be seized. God announces that His wrath is about to descend upon the earth inasmuch as it has been filled with sin and transgression. Then arise and be alert that the end of time, which had been foretold by the Prophets^{as}, is near. I call Him to witness Who has sent me that all this is from Him and not from me. Would that these things were viewed in good faith. Would that I had not been held a liar in their estimation so that the world might have been saved from ruin. These words of mine are not casual utterances, rather they are full of heartfelt sympathy. If you will bring about a change in yourselves and will safeguard yourselves against every evil, you will be delivered, for God is Gentle as well as Severe. Mercy will be shown even if a portion of you reforms itself; otherwise the day is approaching that will render people insane. An unfortunate, foolish one will say that all this is false. Alas! why is he in such deep slumber when the sun is about to rise?

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 523-524]

Warnings of Earthquakes

On 9th April 1905, God Almighty has informed me again of a severe earthquake which will be an example of the Day of Judgement and will render people senseless. As the All-Knowing One has twice informed me of this future event, I believe that this

mighty calamity, which will be a reminder of Doomsday, is not far. The Lord of Honour and Glory has also informed me that both these earthquakes are signs in support of my truth, like the signs which Moses^{as} exhibited to Pharaoh and Noah^{as} exhibited to his people. Bear in mind that this will not be the sum total of such signs, rather sign will follow upon sign until people's eyes will be opened and they will cry out in bewilderment: What is going to happen? Each day will be harder than the last. God says that He will exhibit wondrous works and will not desist until the people reform themselves. As there was such severe famine in the days of Joseph^{as} that even the leaves of trees were not available for food, in the same way calamity will be encountered. As Joseph^{as} saved the people by storing corn, in the same way God has appointed me the administrator of spiritual food to save the people. Whoever partakes of this food in full measure and with a sincere heart will, I am sure, be shown mercy.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 526-527]

Today—29th April 1905—God Almighty has apprised me of the second severe earthquake. Therefore, out of sympathy for God's creatures I inform the world at large that it has been determined in heaven that a severely destructive calamity will overtake the world, which God Almighty has repeatedly referred to as an earthquake. I know not whether it is near or God Almighty will display it later. Its repeated intimation

indicates that it is not very far. This is the tiding conveyed by God and is the revelation of God Almighty Who knows all that is hidden. On the other hand, those people who are announcing that no such severe earthquake is anticipated, whether they are astrologers or make conjectures on the basis of some other science, they are all false and are trying to deceive the people. It is an absolute truth that an earthquake will overtake this country which no eye has seen and no ear has heard nor has any mind conceived it. No remedy is effective against it except repentance and purification of the hearts. Is there anyone who would believe in what I say and would listen to me carefully? It is a misfortune for the country that God's word is derided and made fun of, and the hearts show no fear. God says:

I shall come secretly; I shall come with My hosts at a time when no one will imagine that such an event is pending. Its time might be the morning or sometime at night. Then, O' dear ones who believe in the revelation of God Almighty, be warned and wash clean the garment of your repentance, for the wrath of God is aflame in heaven and He designs to show His face to the world. There is no refuge, save in repentance. Ruined are those who indulge in mockery and laughter and do not refrain from sin and disobedience. Their gatherings are full of impurity and heedlessness and their tongues are worse than corpses. They rouse the ire of God with repeated insolence. Their hearts are blind. God Almighty says that on that day He

would have mercy on those whose hearts are full of fear of Him, who indulge in no evil and do not keep company with evildoers. God has also said: Manifest victory will appear for thee on that day for God will exhibit all that the world was foretold. Fortunate is the one who will understand now....

Announcement by:

Mirzā Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 535-536]

Dear ones! you must have witnessed the earthquake that occurred after 1.00 a.m. on 28th February, 1906. This was the earthquake concerning which God Almighty had announced in His revelation: **Spring has arrived again and God's word has again been fulfilled**.... This was the earthquake which was bound to come in the spring according to Divine revelation, and so it came. It is possible that the promised earthquake, which will be a sample of the Day of Judgement, may also occur in the spring. I, therefore, announce once more and warn that, in my estimation, the day is not very far. Repent and create pure and perfect faith in your hearts and do not sit with those who mock at these things so that you may be shown mercy. Do not imagine that [you will be saved merely because] you have joined this Movement. I tell you truly that whoever is saved will be saved on account of his perfect faith. Can you assuage your hunger with one grain of corn or can one drop of water slake your thirst? In the same way, defective faith cannot benefit

your soul. Those alone are accounted believers in heaven who affirm their faith with fidelity, sincerity, perfect steadfastness, and giving preference to God above everything else. I am in great anxiety as to how I should make these things enter your hearts and how I can put my hand into your hearts to rid them of all evil. Our God is Most Compassionate, Merciful and Faithful, but if someone's heart is afflicted with depravity and does not demonstrate his fidelity in practice, he cannot save himself from His wrath. If you entertain a hidden seed of mistrust in your hearts, your joy is vain. I tell you truly that in such a case you will be seized equally with those who do evil deeds in the sight of God Almighty. Nay, you will be seized with ruin before the other people. Let not the life of comfort deceive you, for comfortless days are near when all that the Prophets of God have been telling from the beginning will be fulfilled. Fortunate is the person who believes in what I say and brings about a change in himself.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 548-549]

Glad Tidings for those who Believe

I inform you and convey to you the glad tidings that the Sailor, Who is the Lord of the heaven and the earth, has heard the supplication of those confronted with the tempest and has fulfilled the promise He made in His Holy Word to save His vessel at the time of the tempest. He has appointed one of His servants that is to say, this humble one who is now speaking to

you, and has explained to him the devices to weather the storm and that would render it unnecessary to throw overboard the boxes of valuables. The time is near when heaven will call out:

يَا زُحْرُ الْبَلْعِ مَاءَكَ وَيَسَاءَ أَفْلَحِي وَغِيْضَ الْمَاءِ
وَقَضَى الْأَمْرَ وَأَسْوَتْ عَلَى الْجُودَى¹³⁶

But right now the flood is at its height. At the approach of this flood God Almighty appointed this humble one and commanded:

وَأَصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيَنَا

That is, build thou the Ark under Our eyes and according to Our directions. This Ark would be in no danger from the tempest. It would be supported by God's hand. This then is the Ark of pure Islam to which I call the people to board. If you are awake, arise and board this Ark quickly for the flood is raging upon the earth and every life is in danger.

[Ā'ina-e-Kamālāt-e-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 5, pp. 261-262, footnote]

Propagation

I convey another message to mankind in general and to my Muslim brethren in particular, that I have been commanded that those who seek the truth should enter into a covenant with me for learning the way of true faith and purity and love of God, and for discard-

¹³⁶ 'O earth, swallow thy water, and O sky, cease *raining*.' And the water was made to subside and the matter was ended. And *the Ark* came to rest on al-Jūdī.—Hūd, 11:45 [Publisher]

ing impure life, sloth and treachery. Therefore, it is incumbent upon those who find strength in their hearts to come to me; I shall be their comforter and shall try to lighten their burden. God Almighty will bless my prayers and my care for them provided they are ready with their heart and soul to fulfil His requirements. This is a Divine commandment which I have hereby conveyed. The relevant revelation in Arabic is as follows:

إذا عزمْتَ فتوَكَّلْ على الله- واصنع الفلك باعيننا ووحينا-
الذين يبايعونك انما يبايعون الله يد الله فوق ايديهم-¹³⁷

Peace be on him who follows the guidance.

Ghulām Aḥmad

1st December, 1888

[Sabz Ishtihār, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 2, p. 470]

Significance of Bai‘at

What is the significance of Bai‘at? The meaning of the word is to exchange one thing with another by mutual consent. The purpose of Bai‘at is that one who enters into the covenant sells his self together with all its capacities to a guide so that in return he should obtain the true understanding and the perfect blessings which should become the means of acquiring cognition, sal-

¹³⁷ When thou hast determined a matter then trust in Allāh and build the Ark under Our eyes and according to Our instructions. Those who enter into covenant with thee enter into a covenant with Allāh. Allāh's hand is above their hands. [Publisher]

vation, and attaining the pleasure of God Almighty. It is thus obvious that Bai'at does not mean simple repentance, because man can bring it about by himself. Rather, it denotes the understanding, blessings and signs which pull one in the direction of true repentance. Its real purpose is to commit one's ego to the service of one's guide and to acquire in return the knowledge, the understanding and the blessings which should strengthen faith and increase true understanding, so that a pure relationship may be established with God Almighty; and thus, having obtained deliverance from worldly hell, one might be delivered from the hell of the hereafter; and, having been cured of blindness in this world, one might be secure against blindness in the hereafter.

[Darūrat-ul-Imam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, p. 498]

Complete Fullfilment of Propagation

Below is a summary explanation of the conditions of Bai'at to which the seekers of truth are called in a pamphlet on 1st January, 1888, on the subject of propagation.¹³⁸

[1] A person entering into the covenant of Bai'at would sincerely undertake that up to the day of his death he shall abstain from associating any partner with Allāh;

¹³⁸ The reference is to Sabz Ishtihār, a portion of which is translated above on pp. 235-236 of this book.

[2] That he shall keep away from falsehood, adultery, treachery of the eye, disobedience, vice, wrongdoing, dishonesty, disorder, and rebellion and that he shall not permit himself to be carried away by his egoistic passions, however strong they might be;

[3] That he shall perform the five daily prayers without fail, according to the command of God and His Messenger^{sa}, and, to the best of his ability, shall try to offer *Tahajjud* prayer and will constantly invoke the blessings of Allāh upon the Holy Prophet^{sa}, and will continuously seek forgiveness for his sins and out of sincere love for God, reminding himself of the bounties of God Almighty, will occupy himself with His praise and glorification;

[4] That he shall in no way harm Allāh's creatures in general and Muslims in particular by giving way to his passions, neither with his hand nor with his tongue or by any other means;

[5] That in all circumstances whether of joy or sorrow, prosperity or adversity, bounty or trial, he shall prove himself faithful to God Almighty, and that in every condition he shall submit to God's decree, being ready to endure every kind of insult and pain in His cause, and that in the hour of any misfortune he will not turn away from Him but will rather draw closer;

[6] That he shall not conform to vulgar customs and shall guard against evil inclinations and shall submit himself wholly to the authority of the Holy Qur'ān

and shall make the Word of Allāh and the word of the Holy Prophet^{sa} the guiding principles of his life;

[7] That he shall discard pride and arrogance and shall pass his days in meekness, humility, courtesy and lowliness;

[8] That he shall hold his faith, its honour, and the welfare of Islam dearer than his own life, property, honour, children and everything else;

[9] That for the sake of winning Allāh's pleasure, he shall occupy himself with sympathy for Allāh's creatures, and that, as far as possible, he shall employ his natural gifts and faculties for promoting the welfare of mankind;

[10] That, for the sake of Allāh, he shall establish the relationship of brotherhood with me, on the condition of obeying me in all that is good, and shall maintain this relationship to the day of his death, and shall set such a high example in respect of it that the like of it shall not be found in any worldly relationship, whether of kinship or that of master and servant.

These are the conditions that are binding upon everyone who enters the covenant of Bai'at....Whoever, responding to my invitation, enters into the covenant and joins this blessed Jamā'at will be considered a member of our Community and will be counted among my sincere friends. These are the people concerning whom God Almighty has said to me that He will place them above the others until the Day of

Judgement and that they will be endowed with blessings and mercy. He commanded me: Build the Ark under My eyes and according to My instructions. God's hand will be above the hands of those who enter into a covenant with thee. He has commanded: Present yourself to God Almighty with all your faculties and do not leave your Noble Lord alone. He who leaves Him alone will be left alone himself.

According to Divine behest, this general invitation is issued for entering into the covenant of Bai'at. Those who are prepared to abide by the conditions set out above are free to come to me for entering into the covenant after having performed the prescribed *Istikhārah*¹³⁹ as taught by Holy Prophet^{sa}. May God Almighty be their helper and bring about a pure change in their lives and bless them with the spirit of truth, piety, love and enlightened conscience (Āmīn).

وآخر دعوانا ان الحمد لله رب العالمين¹⁴⁰

The humblest of the servants of Allāh,
Ghulām Aḥmad of Qādiān,
District Gurdāspūr, Punjāb.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 1, pp. 189-192]

Purpose of the System of Bai'at

If anyone should deliberately contravene the conditions set out in the announcement of 12th January,

¹³⁹ A prayer to seek guidance from Allāh. [Publisher]

¹⁴⁰ Our last supplication is that all praise belongs to Allāh, the Lord of the worlds. [Publisher]

1889, and should persist in his rebellious attitude, he will be expelled from this Movement. The system of Bai'at has been instituted solely with the purpose of brining together a large group of the righteous, so that they should cast a positive influence in the world, and their unity should be a source of blessing and greatness and good harvest for Islam. Since they will be united for the same cause, they will be readily available for the pure and holy service of Islam. They should not be lazy, miserly and purposeless Muslims, nor should they be like the worthless ones who have done great harm to Islam through their dissention and inequity and have stained its beautiful face by their acts of transgression, nor should they be like the heedless dervishes and those who have withdrawn from the world, who are totally unaware of the needs of Islam and unconcerned with the welfare of their brethren, and who feel no eagerness for promoting the welfare of mankind. On the contrary, they should have such sympathy for the people that they should become the refuge of the poor and fathers to the orphans and, like passionate lovers, be always ready to sacrifice themselves for discharging Islamic duties. They should make every effort that their blessings should spread in the world and the pure fountain of love for the Divine and of sympathy for His servants should spring out of every heart, and their unity should be seen as flowing like a river. God Almighty, by His special grace and favour, has designed to make the prayers and the attention of this humble one the

means of the manifestation of their pure capacities. That Holy and Glorious One has inspired me with the eagerness to occupy myself with the inner training of these seekers, and to strive day and night to rid them of their impurities, and to beseech God to grant them the light whereby a person is delivered from the bondage of his ego and of Satan and develops a natural love for the ways of God Almighty. I would also solicit for them the Holy Spirit, which is generated by the strong relationship between perfect Providence and undulated service to God. I would also endeavour to secure their deliverance from the vicious spirit which is generated by the intense relationship between Satan and *Nafs-e-Ammārah* [the Self that incites to evil. Thus, with the help of Allāh, I will not be lax and lazy and will not be heedless in seeking the reform of my friends who have joined this Movement in full sincerity. Indeed, I shall be ready even to face death so that they might live. I shall solicit for them from God Almighty the spiritual power which, like an electric current should activate their entire beings. I am sure that all this will come about for those who, having joined the Movement, shall wait steadfastly, for God Almighty has determined to create this group and to promote it for the manifestation of His Glory and His Power, so as to spread in the world love for Himself and sincere repentance and piety and real goodness and peace and prosperity and sympathy for mankind. Therefore, these will be His own people and He will strengthen them with His own spirit. He will

purify them from a life of impurity and will bring about a pure change in their lives, as He has promised in His holy prophecies, and will cause them to grow rapidly and will bring thousands of the righteous into it. He Himself will water them and cause them to flourish, so much so that their numbers and their blessings will be looked upon with amazement. Like a lamp that is placed at a height, they will spread their light in every corner of the world and will be seen as the symbols of Islamic blessings. God will cause the prefect followers of this Movement to excel the followers of all other faiths in respect of every blessing, and to the Day of Judgement there will appear among them those who will be blessed with acceptance and help. The Lord of Glory has determined this and He has the power to do all that He wills. All power and all strength belong to Him.

فالحمد له أوّلًا و آخرًا و ظاهرًا و باطنًا اسلمنا له هو

مولنا فى الدنيا والاخر نعم المولى و نعم النصير¹⁴¹

Ghulām Aḥmad,
Ludhiāna, 4th March, 1889.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 560-563]

¹⁴¹ All praise is due to Him, the First and the Last and the Overt and the Hidden. We have submitted to Him, He is our Master in this world and in the hereafter; an Excellent Master and an Excellent Helper. [Publisher]

Admonitions to Those who have Pledged the Allegiance of Bai‘at

عزیزاں بے خلوص و صدق نشانید را ہے را
مصفا قطرہ باید کہ تا گوہر شود پیدا¹⁴²

O my friends, who have entered into the covenant of Bai‘at with me, may God enable us all to do that which pleases Him. Today you are small in number and are treated with contempt. You are passing through a time of trial. In accordance with the eternal law of God, efforts will be made that you should stumble. You will be persecuted in every way and you will have to hear all sorts of disagreeable things. Everyone who hurts you by word or deed will imagine that he is helping Islam and you will have to pass through some heavenly trials so that you may be tried in every way. Therefore, listen carefully that your way to victory and supremacy will not be through dry logic or returning abuse for abuse, for if you adopt these ways, your hearts will become hardened and you will be left with nothing but words, which God Almighty hates and looks upon with aversion. So do not behave in a manner whereby you would become subject to two curses, the curse of God and the curse of man.

Remember well that if the curse of man is not accompanied by the curse of God Almighty, it amounts to

¹⁴² Dear ones! No way can be opened without sincerity and truth; A pure drop is needed so that a pearl may be born. [Publisher]

nothing. If God does not wish to destroy us, we cannot be destroyed by anyone; but if He should become our enemy, no one can afford us shelter. How shall we please God Almighty and how shall we win His support? He has repeatedly given me the answer to this question: it can only be done through righteousness. So my dear brethren! make every effort that you may become righteous. Without action, everything is vain and without sincerity no action is acceptable. Righteousness means that, avoiding all these harmful ways, you should march forward towards God Almighty, and be mindful of the subtlest paths of piety. First, cultivate humility, straightforwardness and sincerity, and become truly meek and submissive and lowly, for every seed of good and ill first sprouts in the heart. If your heart is empty of evil, your tongue will also be empty of evil and so will be your eyes and all your limbs. Every light and darkness takes birth initially in the heart and gradually envelops the whole body. So keep your hearts under constant scrutiny. Just as an eater of betel leaves constantly rotates the leaves and snips off their rotten parts and throws them away, in the same way, you should keep rotating before your mind's eye the secret thoughts and habits and passions and hidden capacities of your hearts, and whenever you encounter a rotten thought or habit or capacity, snip it off and throw it out lest it should pollute your whole heart and you may then be cut off.

Having done that, strive, and supplicate to God Almighty for strength and courage, that your limbs and

all your faculties may become the means for the manifestation of pure intentions and thoughts and passions and your heart's desires, so that your good actions may attain perfection. For that which springs up in the heart and remains confined to the heart will not lead you to any worthy status. Establish the greatness of God Almighty in your hearts and keep His Glory before you eyes. Remember that there are approximately five hundred commandments in the Holy Qur'ān. God has prepared a spiritual banquet for you with reference to your every limb, faculty, form, age, every stage of your intelligence, your nature, your effort in His path, and your individual and collective conditions. Accept the invitation to this banquet with gratitude and eat of all the dishes that have been prepared for you and derive benefit from all. I tell you truly that he who evades a single one of these commandments will be accountable on the Day of Judgement. If you seek salvation, adopt the ways of the humble and carry the yoke of the Holy Qur'ān with meekness. The wicked will be ruined and the rebellious will be hurled into hell. But he who bends his neck humbly will be saved from death. Do not worship God Almighty on the condition of worldly benefits, for there is a pitfall in the way of such thinking. Worship Him in the conviction that it is an obligation which you owe to your Creator. Worship of God should become your very life, and the purpose of your good deeds should be that the true Beloved

and the true Benefactor may be pleased with you, for anything less is a stumbling block.

God is a great wealth. To find Him you should be ready to encounter misfortune. He is a great purpose. To achieve it, be ready to lay down your lives. Dear ones! do not slight the commandments of God Almighty. Let not the poison of current philosophy affect you. Submit to His commandments like a child. Be constant in Prayer, be constant in Prayer, for Prayer is the key to all good fortune. Do not stand up in Prayer as if you are performing a ceremony. As you make *Wuḍū'* [physical ablution] in preparation for Prayer, so perform an inner ablution whereby you should wash out from your mind and body all thoughts beside that of Allāh. Then stand up in Prayer after both these purifying ablutions, and supplicate intensively in the course of your Prayer and make crying and weeping your habit so that you may be shown mercy.

Be truthful, be truthful, for He is observing the condition of your hearts. Can man deceive Him? Can cunning devices be of any avail against Him? Greatly unfortunate is the person who carries his disobedience to a degree as if there was no God. Such a one is destroyed quickly and God Almighty cares not at all for him.

Dear ones! the bare logic of this world is a Satan and the hollow philosophy of this world is an *Iblīs* [Satan personified] who reduces the light of faith and renders

a person unduly daring, and carries him to near-atheism. Safeguard yourselves against Satan and develop a heart which is poor and meek. Obey the commandments without whys or wherefores, as a child obeys its mother.

The teachings of the Holy Qur'ān are designed to carry you to the highest stage of righteousness. Lend ear to them and conform yourselves with them. Unlike the Bible, the Holy Qur'ān does not teach that you should not look at a woman—or others who can arouse the lustful passions like women—with a lustful eye. The object of Islam's perfect teaching is that you should not look needlessly at a woman who is not related to you, either with lust or without lust. You should shut your eyes so that you may not stumble and the purity of your heart may not be affected. Remember well this commandment of your Lord and safeguard yourselves against the adultery of the eyes and be fearful of the wrath of the One Whose wrath can destroy in an instant. The Holy Qur'ān also prescribes that you should safeguard your ears against listening to any discourse concerning women outside the prohibited degree and also against every discourse that is otherwise improper. It is not necessary for me to admonish you not to commit murder for no one except a wholly wicked person advances towards murder. But I do admonish you that you should not insist upon injustice and thus slay the truth. Accept the truth even if it should proceed from a child. If you find your opponent uttering the truth then immediately give up your dry logic. Ad-

here to the truth and bear true witness. God the Glorious, says:

فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ ﴿١٤٣﴾

That is: Shun the abomination of idols and shun all words of falsehood, because falsehood is no less than an idol. That which turns you away from the Qiblah of truth is an idol in your path. Bear true witness even if it should be against your fathers or brothers or friends. Let no enmity prevent you from doing justice.

Give up all miserliness, rancour, jealousy, ill-will and coldness and be united. There are two main commandments of the Holy Qur'ān: One is to acknowledge the Unity of God and to render love and obedience to Him, hallowed be His name; the second is sympathy with your brethren and with the whole of mankind.

[Izāla-e-Auhām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 546-550]

The members of my Jamā'at, whether they are present here or whether they are in their own places, should listen carefully to this admonition. The purpose of their joining the Movement and establishing with me a relationship like that of a disciple is that they should achieve a high degree of piety and righteousness. No wrongdoing or mischief should ever come near them. They should offer the five daily Prayers regularly and with congregation, and should not lie nor hurt anyone by their tongues. They should not be guilty of any kind

¹⁴³ Al-Ḥajj, 22:31 [Publisher]

of vice and should not let even a thought of mischief, wrongdoing or transgression pass through their minds. They should shun every type of sin, offence, undesirable speech and action, as well as all egoistic passions and unruly behaviour. They should become pure-hearted, harmless and meek servants of God Almighty, and no poisonous germ should flourish in their beings. They should be sincerely loyal and obedient to the British Government, under which their properties, lives and honour are secure. Sympathy for the entire mankind should be their motto and they should fear God Almighty. They should safeguard their tongues, their hands and their thoughts against every kind of impious and disorderly behaviour and against dishonesty. They should establish the five daily Prayers with utmost regularity. They should refrain from every kind of wrong, transgression, embezzlement, bribery, encroachment of other people's rights and undue partiality. They should not participate in evil company. If it should be proved that one who frequents their company does not obey God's commandments, or is not loyal to the benevolent government, or is not mindful of people's rights, or is cruel or mischievous or of a loose character, or is seeking to deceive the servants of God Almighty by continuing in the habit of abusing, or making false allegations against the person with whom they have entered into a covenant of Bai'at, it will be their duty to remove such evil from among them and to keep away from such a dangerous person. Do not contrive to harm the followers of any religion or the

members of any caste or group. Be true well-wishers of everyone, and take care that no mischievous or vicious person, or disorderly one or ill-behaved one should ever be of your company, or should dwell among you; for such a one will, sooner or later, cause you to stumble.

These are matters and conditions that I have been urging from the beginning and it is the duty of every member of my Jamā'at to act upon all these admonitions. Let there be no impurity or mockery or derision in your meetings. Walk upon the earth with pure hearts and pure tempers and pure thoughts. Remember! Not every evil is worth fighting, so cultivate the habit of forgiveness, and practice toleration and forbearance. Do not attack anyone improperly and keep your passions under complete control. If you take part in a discussion or exchange views on a religious topic, express yourself gently and be courteous. If anyone misbehaves towards you, withdraw from such company quickly with the greeting of peace. If you are persecuted or reviled, be mindful that you should not meet stupidity with stupidity, for otherwise, you will be accounted in the same category as your opponents. God Almighty desires that you should become a Jamā'at that should set an example of goodness and truthfulness for the whole world. Therefore, hasten to exclude everyone from your company who sets an example of mischief and provocation. He who cannot dwell among us in meekness and piety, and is not gentle in his speech and righteous in his conduct,

should promptly leave us, for God does not desire that such a one should dwell among us. He will surely die in misery, for he did not adopt the way of goodness. Be alert, therefore, and be truly good-hearted and gentle and righteous. You will be known by your regular attendance at Prayer and by your high moral qualities. He who has the seed of evil embedded in him will not be able to conform to this admonition.

Your hearts should be free of deceit, your hands should be free from transgression and your eyes should be free from impurity. There should be nothing inside you except truth and sympathy for mankind. I trust that my friends who dwell with me in Qādiān will set a high example in respect of all their faculties. I do not desire that there should ever be anyone in our pious Jamā‘at whose character is suspect or to whose behaviour any exception might be taken, or who should be inclined towards disorderliness or suffer from any other kind of impiety. If we hear any complaint against anyone that he deliberately disregards the obligations due to God Almighty, or sits among people who indulge in mockery or indecency, or is guilty of any kind of misconduct, he will be immediately excluded from the Jamā‘at and will no longer be able to remain with us and our friends.... The fact is that the field which is cultivated with much labour and is ripened also contains some weeds that have to be cut down and burnt. Such is the law of nature, and our Jamā‘at is no exception. I know that those who have joined my Jamā‘at with all

sincerity have been bestowed hearts by God Almighty which instinctively hate evil and love goodness, and I do hope that they will set a good example for the people.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 46-49]

The world is a passing panorama. If a person does not exert himself fully to carry out a good deed at its proper time, he cannot thereafter recover the lost time. I am aware that I have lived the greater part of my life, and it appears from Divine revelations and also from my own estimation that only a small part of it remains. **Therefore, whoever helps me in the attainment of my objectives according to my aspirations and during my lifetime and in my presence will, I trust, be with me on the Day of Judgement also.** And I do not perceive that he who spends money in such important matters will suffer any loss in his wealth because of this spending. Indeed his wealth would be blessed. Therefore, trusting in God Almighty, you should act with full sincerity and eagerness and courage, for this is the time of fruitful service. **Thereafter a time will come when spending a mountain of gold in this cause will not equal in merit the spending of one *paisa* now. This is the blessed time in which he who has been sent by God and whose advent had been awaited by the nations through centuries is present among you,** and every day God is granting fresh revelations which are full of fresh glad tidings. It has been made clear

throughout by God Almighty that only he alone will be considered as having truly and definitely joined this Jamā‘at who spends his property, which he holds dear, in this cause.... Do not imagine that you gain your wealth by your own efforts, it is instead bestowed upon you by God Almighty, nor should you ever imagine that by spending a portion of your wealth or by serving in some other way, you put God Almighty or the one He has sent under any obligation. In fact, it is He Who puts you under obligations by calling you to serve Him. I tell you truly that if all of you should desert me and should hold back from service and help, He will create another people who will render Him the needed services. Be sure that all this is from heaven and your service is for your own good, so let no pride enter your heart, nor should you imagine that you are helping financially or otherwise. I tell you again and again that God is in no need of your service, and it is His grace upon you that He provides you with the opportunity to serve. A few days ago, I received a revelation in Gurdāspūr, in which God says:

لا اله الا انا فاتخذني وكيلا

i.e., I alone am the Accomplisher of every task, so take Me alone as the Accomplisher, and do not consider others to be helping your cause in any way.

When I received this revelation, my heart trembled with the realization that my Jamā‘at had not yet arrived at a stage where God Almighty should have even mentioned them. I have no greater anxiety than

that I should die and leave this Jamā'at in such a state of inadequacy and imperfection. I know for certain that miserliness and faith cannot coexist in a heart...I will not remain long among you and the time is coming when you will not see me anymore. Many will wish that they had performed some valuable service in my presence. Now is the time to provide against such a possibility. Just as previous Prophets and Messengers^{as} did not dwell forever among their followers, I too shall not remain among you, so value the time you have. Even if you perform such service for which you have to sell all your immovable property, it would be disrespectful of you to imagine that you have performed any service. You are not aware how Divine Mercy is eager in support of this faith, and how His angels are descending upon the hearts. Every matter of reason and understanding that arises in your hearts is not from yourselves but from God. Wonderful light and knowledge is descending from heaven. I admonish you repeatedly to serve to the utmost limit of your capacities, but let not a thought pass through your minds that you have done something. If you ever think so, you will be ruined. All such thoughts are disrespectful. A disrespectful one is ruined much quicker than anyone else.

[Majmū'ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 496-499]

Let me make it clear that to affirm the covenant of Bai'at with the tongue alone amounts to nothing unless it is practiced with full resolve. He who acts

fully on my teachings enters that house of mine, concerning which there is a promise in Divine revelation:

إِنِّي أَحَافِظُ كُلَّ مَنْ فِي الدَّارِ

It means that I shall safeguard everyone who is within the walls of your house. This should not be taken to mean only such people as dwell in my house made of bricks. Rather it refers to all those who follow me completely and dwell in my spiritual house. To follow me, it is necessary for them to believe that they have a Mighty, Self-Existing and All-Creating God, Whose attributes are eternal, everlasting and unchangeable. He has no father and no son. He is much above being put upon the cross and being killed. He is such that despite being far, He is near; and despite being near, He is far. Despite being One, His manifestations are diverse. For a man who brings about a change in himself, He becomes a new God and deals with him with a new manifestation. Thus, a person experiences a change in God according to the change in himself. Yet no change takes place in God, for He is eternally Unchangeable and Most Perfect, but when a person moves towards goodness, God manifests Himself to him in a new way. At the time of every improved condition that manifests itself in a person, God's manifestation of Power also reveals itself in an improved manner. He manifests His might in an extraordinary way only when an extraordinary change takes place in a person. This is at the root of all extraordinary happenings and miracles. This is the God our Jamā'at has to believe in. Believe in Him and pre-

fer Him to your own souls and to your comforts and all your relationships; and show practical sincerity, courage and loyalty in His cause. People of the world do not prefer Him to their resources and their kith and kin, but you must prefer Him above everything else so that you might be recorded in heaven as belonging to His Jamā'at.

To display signs of His mercy is the eternal way of God, but you can participate of it only when nothing separates you from Him, your will is subordinate to His will, your desire is identified with His desire, and your head lies prostrate at His threshold at all times and in all conditions—whether of success or failure—so that He may do whatever He wills. If you do so, then God, Who has hidden His countenance for a long time, will manifest Himself in you. Is there anyone among you who is prepared to act in this way so as to seek His pleasure and not to be disquieted by His decrees? When you encounter misfortune, you should step forth even more eagerly, for this is the only means of your progress. Try with all your might to spread His Unity on earth, have mercy on His creatures, do not wrong them by your tongue or your hand or by any other means and strive to promote their welfare. Entertain no pride against anyone, even if he were your subordinate, and revile not anyone, even if he should revile you. Become meek and tolerant and well-intentioned, and sympathetic to God's creatures so that you may be accepted.

There are many who show meekness, but they are wolves inside. There are many who appear clean but are serpents within. You, therefore, cannot be accepted by Him unless you are the same inside and out. Being great, have mercy on the lowly and do not look down upon them. Possessing knowledge, admonish the ignorant ones and do not humiliate them by self-conceit. Being wealthy, serve the poor and behave not arrogantly towards them.

Dread the ways of ruin and always be fearful of God. Adopt the ways of righteousness and worship no creature and cut asunder from everything to turn to your Lord. Turn your hearts away from the world and become wholly His, and live for Him alone and, for His sake, hate every impiety and sin, for He is Holy. Let every morning bear witness that you have spent the night in righteousness, and let every evening bear witness that you have spent the day in His fear. Be not afraid of the curses of the world, for they are apt to disappear like smoke and cannot turn day into night. But be fearful of God's curse which descends from heaven and upon whomsoever it falls it consumes him in both worlds. You cannot save yourselves with hypocrisy, for the eye of the God you believe in penetrates you through and through; can you then deceive Him? Become straightforward, clean, pure and truthful. If even a particle of darkness is left in you, it will dispel all your light. And if you have any portion of arrogance, or hypocrisy, or self-love, or sloth, you are not something worthy of accep-

tance. Do not deceive yourselves with your few accomplishments, and do not imagine that you have done all that was required of you, for God desires a complete revolution in your beings and He demands from you a death whereafter He should revive you. Hasten to make peace with one another and forgive your brethren their sins, for he who is not inclined to make peace with his brother is wicked and will be cut off because he is the cause of dissension. Part with your ego in every way and do away with mutual grievances. Being in the right, show humility like the one who is in the wrong, so that you may be forgiven. Discard the obesity of your ego, for a fat one cannot enter through the door to which you have been called.

How unfortunate is the one who does not believe in that which has come from the mouth of God and which I have set forth. If you desire that God should be pleased with you in heaven, be to each other like brothers born of the same mother. The more venerable among you is he who forgives his brother more, and unfortunate is the one who is obstinate and does not forgive. Such a one has no part in me. Be very fearful of God's curse for He is Holy and Jealous. An evildoer cannot attain nearness to God, nor an arrogant one, nor a wrongdoer, nor a dishonest one, nor one who is not jealous for the sake of His name, nor those who fall upon the world like dogs and ants and vultures and find their whole comfort in the world. Every impure eye is far from Him, every impure heart is unaware of Him. He who is afire for His sake will

be delivered from the fire; he who weeps for His sake will laugh; and he who cuts asunder from the world for His sake will find Him. Become the friends of God with a true heart and full sincerity and complete eagerness, so that He should become your friend. Have mercy on your subordinates and your wives and your less fortunate brethren so that you may have mercy from heaven. Become truly His so that He should become yours. The world is full of calamities, one of which is the plague. Hold fast to God with sincerity so that He should safeguard you against all calamities. No calamity overtakes the earth until there is a command from heaven, and no misfortune is repelled until mercy descends from heaven. Wisdom demands that you should take hold of the root and not of the branch. You are not prohibited from having recourse to the necessary means and appropriate remedies, but you are forbidden to rely upon them. In the end, only that will come about which will be decreed by God. Complete trust in God, if one has the strength for it, is greater than anything else.

An essential teaching for you is that you should not abandon the Holy Qur'ān like something forsaken, for therein is your life. Those who honour the Qur'ān will be honoured in heaven. Those who prefer the Qur'ān to every Ḥadīth and every other saying will receive preference in heaven. For mankind, there is no book on the face of the earth except the Qur'ān, and for all children of Adam, there is no Messenger and Intercessor but Muḥammad, the Chosen One^{sa}. Endeavour

to cultivate true love for that Prophet^{sa} of dignity and majesty, and do not give anyone else any kind of preference over him, so that in heaven you may be counted as those who have attained salvation.

Remember that salvation is not something that will only be manifested after death, for true salvation is that which exhibits its light in this very world. Who is it that attains salvation? It is only he who believes that God is true, that Muḥammad^{sa} is the Intercessor between God and all His creatures and that there is no Messenger equal to him in rank under heaven, nor is there any book equal in status to the Holy Qur'ān. God did not desire immortality for anyone, but this Chosen Prophet^{sa} lives forever.

[Kashfī-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 10-14]

I repeat that you should not be content with having made the covenant of Bai'at as a matter of form, for that amounts to nothing. God looks at your hearts and will deal with you accordingly. Look, I hereby discharge my obligation of conveying my message by warning you that sin is a poison, so do not swallow that poison. Disobedience of God is a filthy death, so safeguard yourselves against it. Supplicate that you might be granted strength. He who at the time of supplication does not believe that God has the power to do everything—except that which might be contrary to His promise—is not one of my Jamā'at. He who does not give up lying and deceit is not one of my Jamā'at. He who is caught up all the time in worldly

attractions and does not lift his eye to look at the hereafter, is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who does not in truth prefer the faith to the world is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who does not shun every vice and every evil deed, i.e., liquor, gambling, evil looks, deceit, bribery and every misappropriation, is not of my Jamā‘at. He who does not take it upon himself to perform the five daily Prayers is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who is not constant in supplication and does not remember God with humility is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who does not discard the company of an evil one who influences him towards vice is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who does not honour his parents and does not obey them in all matters that are not contrary to the Qur’ān, and is careless in serving them diligently, is not of my Jamā‘at. He who does not treat his wife and her relatives with gentleness and benevolence is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who refrains from doing even the least bit of good to his neighbour is not of my Jamā‘at. He who does not desire to forgive an offender and entertains rancour is not one of my Jamā‘at. Every husband who deceives his wife, and every wife who deceives her husband, is not of my Jamā‘at. He who breaks the covenant of Bai‘at in any respect is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who does not truly believe in me as the Promised Messiah and Mahdī is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who is not willing to obey me in all good matters is not one of my Jamā‘at. He who consorts with my opponents and endorses what they say, is not of my

Jamā'at. Every adulterer, disobedient one, winebibber, murderer, thief, gambler, deceiver, bribe-taker, usurper, tyrant, liar, forger and their companion, and everyone who calumniates his brothers or sisters and does not repent of his vices and does not abstain from joining evil company is not of my Jamā'at.

All these are poisons. You cannot swallow poison and survive; light and darkness cannot exist together. Everyone who has a crooked disposition and is not straightforward with God can never achieve the blessing that is bestowed on the pure-hearted. How fortunate are those who cleanse their hearts and purify their hearts of every impurity and take a pledge of faithfulness to their God, for they will never be destroyed. It is not possible that God should humiliate them, for they are God's and God is theirs. They will be safeguarded at the time of every calamity. Foolish is the enemy who moves against them, for they are in the lap of God and enjoy His support.

Who is it that truly believes in God? Only those who are such as we have just described. Similarly, he who pursues a fearless sinner, vicious and evil-minded, is foolish, for such a one will destroy himself in due course. Ever since God has created the heaven and the earth, it has never happened that He should have ruined or destroyed or obliterated the good. On the contrary, he has always shown wonders on their behalf and will also show them now. God is very Faithful and, for the faithful, He manifests wondrous works. The world desires to devour them and every

enemy grinds his teeth at them, but He Who is their friend, delivers them from every place of danger and bestows victory upon them in every field. How fortunate is the person who never lets go the mantle of God. We have believed in Him and we have recognized Him. The God of the whole world is He Who has sent down His revelation to me, Who has shown mighty signs in my support and Who has sent me as the Promised Messiah for this age. There is no God beside Him, neither in heaven nor in earth. He who does not believe in Him is bereft of all good fortune and is caught in humiliation. I have received God's revelation which is as bright as the sun. I have seen that He is the God of the world and that there is none other. How Mighty and Self-Supporting is the God Whom we have found. How great are the powers of Him Whom we witnessed. The truth is that nothing is beyond Him except that which is contrary to His books and His promise. Therefore, when you pray, do not be like the ignorant ones who pretend to follow nature and have devised a natural law which does not bear the seal of God's Book. They are the rejected ones whose prayers will not be accepted. They are blind and not seeing. They are dead, not alive. They present to God their self-devised law and presume to limit His limitless powers and deem Him weak. So He will treat them according to their condition. But when you stand up in prayer, you should have full faith that your God has power to do all that He wills. Then your prayer will be accepted and you will ex-

perience the wonders of God's power that I have experienced. My testimony is based on actual experiences and it is not a tale.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 18-21]

If you become God's then be sure that God is yours. You will be asleep and God Almighty will keep awake for you. You will be unmindful of the enemy and God will watch him and will frustrate his designs. You still do not know the extent of God's powers. Had you known it, not a single day would you have grieved after the world. Does he who owns a treasure weep and cry and become sorrowful unto death by losing a *paisa*? Had you been aware of the treasure, that at every time of need God will do the needful, you would not have been so restless after the world. **God is a lovely treasure**, value Him accordingly. He is your Helper at every step; without Him you are nothing, nor do your resources and your devices amount to anything. Do not follow other people for they have become wholly reliant upon the means....I do not forbid you to employ means within moderation, but I do forbid you to become slaves of means like other people and to forget the God Who provides the means. Had you possessed the eye, you would have seen that God is everything and all else is nothing. You can neither stretch forth your hand nor hold it back, but under His command. A [spiritually] dead one might laugh at this, if he had truly died, it would have been better for him than this laughter. Beware! Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of other people

thinking that they have progressed far in the world. Lend ear and realize that these people are totally unaware and heedless of God Who calls you to Himself. What is their god? Only a helpless human being! They are, therefore, languishing in ignorance. I do not forbid you the pursuit of worldly vocations and trade, but I forbid you to follow those whose world is their all. Continue to supplicate God for strength and ability in all your endeavours whether they are worldly or relate to the faith. Your supplications should not be confined to your lips, but you must believe truly that every blessing descends from heaven. You will become righteous only when you become such that whenever you are in need or are faced with some problem, you shut your door and fall down at the threshold of the Divine with your difficulty and supplicate to Him so that He may resolve it by His Grace. You will then be helped by the Holy Spirit and a hidden path will be opened for you. Have mercy on your souls and do not follow those who have cut asunder altogether from God and depend wholly upon means, so much so that they do not even seek strength from Allāh by saying *Inshā'Allāh*.¹⁴⁴ May God open your eyes so that you should realize that He is the cross-beam of all your plans. If the cross-beam should fall, can the rafters continue to support the roof? Indeed not, they would suddenly fall and might even cause loss of life. In the same way, your plans cannot suc-

¹⁴⁴ If God so wills. [Publisher]

ceed without the help of God. If you will not supplicate Him for help, and will not make it your rule to seek strength from Him, you will achieve no success and will die in sorrow. Do not wonder why other people seem to succeed, while they are not even aware of the existence of God Who is your Perfect and Mighty Lord. It is because they have been subjected to the trial of the world on account of their abandoning God. He sometimes tries a person, who abandons Him and seeks the attractions and the joys and pleasures of the world and runs after its riches, by opening the doors of the world to him. Such a one is wholly deprived of faith. In the end, he dies with his mind devoted wholly to the world and is cast into eternal hell. Sometimes, such a person is tried by being deprived of the world also. But this latter kind of trial is not as fearful as the former, for the one who is subjected to the former becomes more arrogant. In any case, both these paths earn the wrath of God. The fountainhead of true prosperity is God. How can these people attain true prosperity when they are unaware of the Ever-Living and Self-Supporting God and are heedless of Him and turn away from Him? Blessed is he who understands this mystery and ruined is the one who does not.

You should similarly not follow the philosophers of this world, nor look upon them with honour, for they only pursue follies. The true philosophy is that which God has taught you in His Word. Those who are in love with the secular philosophy are in ruin and truly

successful are those who have sought true knowledge and true philosophy in God's Book. Why do you follow the paths of foolishness? Will you teach God that which He does not know? Will you run after the blind so that they should guide you? O foolish ones, how will he, who is himself sightless, guide you? True philosophy is acquired through the Holy Spirit which you have been promised. Through it you will be carried to the pure knowledge to which others have no access. You will obtain such knowledge if you sincerely seek it. You will then find that it is the knowledge which freshens and revives the heart and guides you to the pinnacle of certainty. He who feeds upon carrion cannot bring you pure food. He who is sightless cannot show you the path. All pure wisdom descends from heaven; then what is it that you are seeking from the earthly ones? Those whose souls ascend to heaven are the true heirs of wisdom. He who is not satisfied himself cannot bestow satisfaction upon you, but the purity of heart is the primary condition. Sincerity and purity are the pre-requisite, after which everything will be bestowed upon you.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 22-24]

Now you should reflect and decide in your own minds that, having made the covenant of Bai'at with me and having accepted me as the Promised Messiah, and as the Arbiter and Judge, if your heart feels constrained or anguished over any decision or action of mine, you should be concerned about the sincerity of your faith. No good can be expected from faith that is full of

doubts and suspicions. If you have accepted truly that the Promised Messiah is in fact the Arbiter, then submit completely to his command and look upon his decisions with respect so that you may be counted among those who honour the word of the Holy Prophet^{sa} and esteem it highly. Sufficient is the evidence of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. He assures you that the Promised Messiah will be your Imām and Arbiter and Judge. If this is not enough to satisfy you, how then will you be satisfied?

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, pp. 73-74]

Be it known to all sincere ones who have entered into the covenant of Bai'at with me, that the purpose of the covenant is that the love of the world should grow cold and the love of God and of the Holy Prophet^{sa} should fill the heart, and the soul should be so weaned away from the world that the journey to the hereafter should not appear disagreeable. But for the achievement of this purpose it is necessary to stay in my company and to spend some time of your life in this way, so that, if God should so will, by witnessing some sure sign all weakness and indifference may be removed and perfect faith may be generated, resulting in eagerness, enthusiasm and passionate love. You should always keep this in mind and supplicate that God Almighty should make this possible. Until such an opportunity arises, advantage should be taken of such meetings off and on, for to enter into the covenant of Bai'at and not to be eager to seek opportunities for meeting would reduce the covenant

to a mere ceremony which would be devoid of all blessings.

[Āsmānī Faiṣlah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 4, p. 351]

The human heart is like *Hajr-e-Aswad* [the Black Stone] and a man's bosom is like *Baitullāh* [the House of Allāh]. The thoughts of that which is beside Allāh are the idols installed in the ka'bah of his heart. The idols of the Holy city of Mecca were obliterated when our Holy Prophet^{sa}, accompanied by ten thousand saints, arrived at Mecca and Mecca surrendered....To defeat and obliterate the idols that are beside Allāh, it is necessary that they should be invaded in the same manner....A Jihad is needed for clearing this house of its idols and I teach you the way of this Jihad, and assure you that if you follow it you will succeed in breaking those idols. This way is not devised by me. God has appointed me to disclose it to you. What is that way? It is that you should follow me and obey me. This is not a new call. To clear Mecca of idols, the Holy Prophet^{sa} also announced:

قُلْ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ تُحِبُّونَ اللَّهَ فَاتَّبِعُونِي يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللَّهُ¹⁴⁵

In the same way, if you will follow me you will be able to break the idols that are inside you and you will be able to purify your bosoms which are filled with idols of many kinds. No hard disciplines are needed for the purification of the self. The Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} did not subject themselves to any hard

¹⁴⁵ Say, 'If you love Allāh, follow me; *then* will Allāh love you.—Āl-Imrān, 3:32 [Publisher]

disciplines nor to any purposeless repetition of formulas. What they possessed was something very different: they were wholly committed to obedience of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. The light that was in him passed through the duct of obedience and fell upon the hearts of his Companions^{ra} and wiped out all thoughts of everything beside Allāh. Their bosoms were filled with light in place of darkness. Remember well that the same is the situation today. You cannot be purified until the light which comes through the Divine duct falls upon your hearts. The human bosom is the place of descent of Divine light; that is why it is called the House of Allāh. The grand design is that the idols that fill it should be broken and Allāh alone should dwell in it.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 187-188]

Spread of the Jamā‘at

Although our Jama‘at has not yet spread in large numbers in different parts of the world, my followers are to be found in many places, from Peshawar to Bombay, Calcutta, Hyderabad Deccan, and even in Arab countries. This Jamā‘at initially spread and increased in the Punjab and now I find that it is progressing in most parts of India. Its membership is composed more of learned people and less of others.....The grace and power of God Almighty have frustrated the plans of Maulavīs and has increased our Jamā‘at in an extraordinary way and is increasing it continuously. In this Jamā‘at will be found largely

people who are disposed to virtue, fear God, show compassion for mankind and strive heart and soul for the success of the faith. Their hearts are filled with the greatness of God Almighty; they are sensible and intelligent; they are men of high resolve, and have true love for God and His Messenger^{sa}. I perceive that it is the Divine design to foster this Jamā‘at and to bless it and to bring into it fortunate people from the ends of the earth.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā’in, vol. 13, pp. 204-205, footnote]

Resemblance of the Jamā‘at to the Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa}

Just consider whether, during the last thirteen hundred years, anyone has experienced a time which is so similar to the time of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Our Jamā‘at, which has been established in this age, resembles in many respects the Companions^{ra} of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Our people witness miracles and signs such as the Companions^{ra} witnessed and gain light and certainty from fresh heavenly signs and support as the Companions^{ra} did. They endure, in the cause of Allāh, the mockery and derision and reproaches of people, and bear persecution and boycotts, just as the Companions^{ra} endured. They lead pure lives helped by clear heavenly signs and supports and wise teachings, as did the Companions^{ra}. There are many among them who weep during their Prayers as the Companions^{ra} wept—so profusely that their places of prostration were dampened. Many of them see true dreams and

are honoured with Divine revelations, as was the case with the Companions^{ra}. Many of them spend their hard-earned money in promoting the activities of the Jamā'at, purely for the sake of winning the pleasure of God Almighty, as did the Companions^{ra}. Many among them keep death in mind and are gentle of heart and tread the path of true righteousness, as was the practice of the Companions^{ra}. They are the party of God who are supported by God Himself and whose hearts He is purifying daily and whose bosoms He is filling with the wisdom of faith and whom He is drawing towards Himself through heavenly signs, as He did with the Companions^{ra}. In short, this Jamā'at exhibits all those signs which are implied in the verse:

اٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ¹⁴⁶

The Word of God Almighty was bound to be fulfilled.

[Ayyām-us-Şulḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 306-307]

God, Who is hidden from the eyes but is shining brighter than anything else, and of Whose majesty even the angels are afraid of, does not like insolence and cunning. He has mercy upon those who fear Him, so be fearful of Him and say everything after deliberation. You are His Jamā'at whom He has chosen to set an example of goodness. He who does not discard vice, whose lips do not shun falsehood and whose heart does not exclude impure thoughts, will be cut off from this Jamā'at. O Servants of God! cleanse

¹⁴⁶ Others from among them.— Al-Jumu'ah, 62:4 [Publisher]

your hearts and wash your inner self. You can please everyone with hypocrisy and double dealing, but you will only earn the wrath of God by this habit. Have mercy upon yourselves and safeguard your progeny against ruin. It is not possible that God should be pleased with you while in your hearts there is someone who is dearer to you than Him. Spend yourselves in His way, and be devoted to Him, and become wholly His if you desire that you should see Him in this very life.

[Rāz-e-Ḥaqīqat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 156-157]

Purpose for the Establishment of the Jamā'at

The purpose of God Almighty in setting up this Jamā'at is that the true understanding of God, which has disappeared from the world, and true righteousness and purity, which are not to be found in this age, might be re-established. Arrogance is rife throughout the world. The divines are caught in the pride and vanity of their learning. You find that the condition of the mendicants belies their objectives. They are wholly unconcerned with self-improvement, and all the disciplines which they have devised are error and innovation. They are only words and form and have no spiritual reality. Their exercises and devotion have a different form altogether like meaningless repetitions which cannot be traced back to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. I find that they pay no attention to inner purification, nor can their artificial disciplines purify

their hearts, nor can they acquire the light of true understanding through them. This age has become empty of true righteousness and purity. The way of the Holy Prophet^{sa}, which is the means of purification, has been discarded. Now God Almighty desires that the time of Prophethood should be revived in this age and the same righteousness and purity should be re-established. Thus, the purpose of God Almighty in setting up this Jamā'at is that through it the lost understanding might be re-established in the world.

[Taqrīrīn, pp. 21-22]

O ye people, fear God and make true peace with Him and put on the garments of righteousness. Let every mischief depart from you. God has unlimited wondrous powers. He has limitless mercy and grace. He it is Who can dry up a terrible flood in an instant. He it is Who can cast away fatal calamities with a single stroke of His hand. But these wonderful powers of His are manifested only to those who become wholly His. Only those witness these extraordinary manifestations who, for His sake, bring about a holy change in themselves and fall down prostrate at His threshold; who become pure like the drop of water which develops into a pearl; and who, being melted by the heat of love and sincerity and devotion, begin to flow towards Him. He takes care of them in misfortunes and delivers them in a wonderful manner from the conspiracies and designs of their enemies and safeguards them against situations of ignominy. He becomes their guardian and their ally and helps them

in their difficulties when no human being can render them any help and His hosts descend in their support. How grateful should we be that our God is Beneficent and Powerful! Will you then desert such a Dear One? Will you transgress His limits for the sake of your unholy selves? It is better for us to die seeking His pleasure than to continue living impure lives.

[Ayyām-uş-Şulh, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 14, pp. 341-342]

O my friends! O my dear people! O ye the flourishing branches of the tree of my being, who enjoy the mercy of God Almighty for having entered into the covenant of Bai‘at with me, and are devoting your lives, your comfort and your properties to this cause! Though I am aware that you will deem it your good fortune to do whatever I say to the best of your abilities, I do not desire to lay down anything by myself as an obligation upon you, so that your service should not be the result of my directive, but should proceed out of your own free will. Who is my friend and who is dear to me? Who is it that recognizes me? Only he who believes that I am one commissioned by God and accepts me as such people ought to be accepted. The world cannot accept me because I am not of the world, but those whose nature has been invested with a portion of the other world accept me and will continue to accept me. He who turns away from me turns away from Him Who has sent me, and he who establishes a relationship with me, establishes a relationship with Him from Whom I have come. I hold a lamp in my hand. He who comes to me will

surely partake of its light, but he who turns away, out of suspicion and ill-will, will be cast into the darkness. I am the citadel of security for this age. He who enters in it will become secure against thieves, robbers and wild beasts. But he who seeks to remain away from my walls will be confronted with death from every side and even his dead body will not be in peace. Who is it who enters my citadel? Only he who discards evil and adopts piety, and gives up crookedness and treads the path of righteousness, and frees himself from the bondage of Satan and becomes an obedient servant of God Almighty. Everyone who does so, is in me and I am in him. But only he has the power to attain to this status whom God Almighty puts under the protections of the Purifying Self. The Purifying Self puts its foot in the hell of such a one's ego and it cools down as if there had never been any fire in it. He then marches forward until the spirit of God Almighty dwells in him, and, with a special manifestation, the Lord of the worlds establishes Himself in his heart. His old humanity is then consumed and a new and pure humanity is bestowed on him, and God Almighty too becomes a new God and establishes a new and special relationship with him, and he is provided in this very life with all the pure necessities of heavenly life.

[Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 3, pp. 34-35]

O my Jamā'at, may God Almighty be with you. May that Mighty Benefactor prepare you for the journey to the hereafter as the Companions^{ra} of the Holy Proph-

et^{sa} were prepared. Bear in mind that this world is nothing. Cursed is the life which is only for this world and unfortunate is the person all whose grief and sorrow is for the world. If there is such a one in my Jamā'at, it is in vain that he considers himself to be in my Jamā'at, for he is like a dry branch that will not bear fruit.

O fortunate ones! Follow with eagerness the teaching which has been given to me for your salvation. Believe in God as One and without associate, and do not associate anything with Him either in heaven or in the earth. God does not forbid you to employ means but he who turns aside from God and depends entirely upon means is an idolater. God has ever affirmed that there is no salvation without a pure heart, so become pure-hearted and cast aside egoistic rancour and fury. Man's ego has many impurities but the greatest of all is the filth of arrogance. Had there been no arrogance, no one would have disbelieved. So become meek of heart and have sympathy for all mankind. You preach to them about paradise, but how can your preaching be honest if you should wish them ill in this transient world? Discharge your obligations to God Almighty with fear in your hearts for you will be called to account in respect of them. Supplicate earnestly in your Prayers so that God may draw you to Himself and purify your hearts. Man is weak and sin can only be overcome by the power of God Almighty, and unless one is bestowed power by God, one cannot succeed in overcoming sin. Islam does not teach that you should

merely recite the *Kalima* as a matter of form, rather the reality of Islam is that your souls should fall prostrate at the threshold of God Almighty, and that in every respect you should give preference to God and His commandments over your worldly affairs.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātāin, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 63]

My repeated admonition to my Jamā'at is that man's life is short and transitory. It cannot be depended upon. Before you is a great task. Try by every means that your end should be good.

In trying to achieve a good end, one encounters many obstacles. When a person arrives in the world, the first part of his life passes unconsciously, for he is then a child and has little knowledge. When he arrives at the age of discretion, he enters into another stage in which, though he is not unconscious as he was in his childhood, he is positively overtaken by a condition of unconsciousness, which is caused by the frenzy of youth and passions of *Nafs-e-Ammārah*.¹⁴⁷ These cause negligence in these days of awareness and he is so lost in his self as if he were unconscious. Thus these two periods of man's life are lost. Then comes the third period when old age overtakes man and, having obtained knowledge, he becomes without knowledge, as it were. His senses and other faculties start declining. Some people, as soon as they enter upon old age, begin to exhibit signs of insanity and seem to have lost all their senses and begin to behave

¹⁴⁷ The Self that incites to evil. [Publisher]

like children. In many families, after the age of sixty or seventy years the senses become useless. Even if that should not be so, there is a decline in the faculties and powers of man, and even in consciousness a person behaves as if he were unconscious, and weakness and listlessness become apparent. Human life is divided into these three periods and each has its own difficulties. Just consider how many obstructions man has to encounter in order to achieve a good end.

[Taqrīrīn, pp. 1-2]

As I have often admonished, it is essential that a person should not deliberately push himself into the pit of sin, for that means certain ruin. He who swallows poison knowingly or jumps into a well does not deserve the sympathy of his fellow beings or the mercy of God Almighty. It is therefore necessary, indeed it is essential for [members of] our Jamā‘at (which God has chosen as an example for future generations) that they should shun evil companions and friends who are likely to have an ill-effect upon their spirituality. They should devote themselves to piety and should take care that in all their actions and under all circumstances they should be a guiding example for others. For this purpose, they should devise every necessary scheme to shun evil company and sinful habits. Bear in mind that to pursue plans for the acquisition of righteousness and goodness is also a subtle form of worship. Do not hold it of little account. When a person occupies himself with such an effort, it is God’s way that He opens a path for him which secures him

against sin. But he who makes no plan to avoid sin and to do good, would seem to be content with sin. God Almighty withdraws from such a one and it becomes impossible for him to discard sin. I tell you truly that when a person, despite being caught in the wiles of his *Nafs-e-Ammārah*¹⁴⁸ constantly plans to get rid of it, then, by the grace and mercy of God Almighty, his evil-directing Self liberates itself from its evil direction and becomes *Nafs-e-Lawwamah*¹⁴⁹ and undergoes such a remarkable change that from being *Nafs-e-Ammārah*, which was accursed, the Self now achieves such honour that even God Almighty calls it to witness.

[Taqrīrīn, pp. 5-6]

O ye people who consider yourselves members of my Jamā'at! you will be accounted as such in heaven when you truly tread upon the path of righteousness. So offer the five daily prayers in such fear and with such complete attention as if you are actually beholding God Almighty. Observe your Fasts in full sincerity for the sake of God. Let everyone who is assessable to Zakat, pay the Zakat. Let him upon whom the Pilgrimage is obligatory and there is no obstruction in his way, perform the Pilgrimage. Do good in a handsome way and discard vice with disgust. Bear well in mind that no action of yours which is empty of righteousness can reach God Almighty. Righteous-

¹⁴⁸ The Self that incites to evil. [Publisher]

¹⁴⁹ The self-reproaching Self. [Publisher]

ness is the root of all goodness. No action that is rooted in righteousness will go in vain. It is inevitable that you should also be tried with all kinds of anguish and misfortune, just as the faithful before you were tried. Be alert, therefore, lest you should stumble. So long as you have a firm relationship with Heaven, the earth can do you no harm. Whenever harm befalls you, it will be through your own hands and not through your enemy. Even if you lose all honour on earth, God will bestow eternal honour upon you in heaven. So do not leave Him.

It is inevitable that you will be persecuted and will suffer many disappointments, but do not lose heart in such situations for it is your God Who tries you whether you are steadfast in His cause or not. If you desire that angels should praise you in heaven, then endure beating and be joyful, hear abuses and be grateful, experience failure and do not sever your relationship with God.

You are the last Jamā‘at of God, so practice virtue at its best. Everyone of you who becomes slothful will be cast out of the Jamā‘at like a foul thing and will die in regret and will be able to do no harm to God. I am very glad to inform you that your God truly exists. All are His creatures but He chooses the one who chooses Him. He comes to the one who goes to Him. He bestows honour upon him who honours Him. Approach Him with straight hearts and pure tongues and eyes and ears; He will then accept you. What God desires from you by way of faith is that He is One and

Muḥammad^{sa} is His Prophet and that he is *Khātām-ul-A'nbiyā'* [Seal of the Prophets] and above all the other Prophets^{as}. There is no Prophet after him except one who, by way of reflection, is clad in the mantle of *Muḥammadiyyat*, for a servant cannot be considered separate from his master, nor a branch from the trunk.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, pp. 15-16]

A true Muslim loves God Almighty dear, saying and believing that He is my Beloved and Master and Creator and Benefactor. Therefore, he places his head at His threshold. If a true Muslim is told that he will receive nothing in return for his good deeds, that there is no heaven and no hell, and no comfort and no delight, he would still not give up his righteous deeds and his love for the Divine. This is because all his worship, his relationship with God Almighty and his obedience to Him and his losing himself in submission to Him is not because he expects any reward or punishment. He regards his own being as something which has been created solely for the recognition of God Almighty and for His love and obedience and for no other purpose whatsoever. When he employs his faculties to achieve this purpose, he beholds the countenance of his True Beloved. He does not look solely towards heaven or hell. Let me say that if I were to be told that in return for my love of God Almighty and for my obedience to Him I would be subjected to the severest torments, I can affirm on oath that such is my nature that it would be prepared to endure all these pains and torments with the eagerness that comes of

love. Despite the certainty of pain and torment that might be meted out to me, I would regard going one step outside the obedience of God as worse than a thousand, rather countless deaths, or a host of calamities.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, pp. 182-183]

It is incumbent upon the members of our Jamā‘at that they should now adopt the ways of righteousness and should try to become Allāh’s friends. Today earthly resources will not avail, nor will your schemes or excuses be of any use. Why should you love the world, and why should you depend upon it? It is more than enough that one should make peace with God Almighty and now is the time for it. They should take advantage of this opportunity to make their peace with God through Himself. There are many illnesses which operate as go-betweens and lead man to God. The members of our Jamā‘at should carry out in one stroke the change that they would otherwise have achieved in ten years. They have no other place of refuge. If they supplicate God Almighty, relying fully upon Him, they will surely receive glad tidings from Him and peace and tranquillity will descend upon them just as it descended upon the Companions^{ra} of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. The Companions^{ra} did not know what would happen, but they were sure in their hearts that God Almighty would not let them be destroyed. This feeling of assurance is the source of tranquillity. If I were to be afflicted with the plague and my life seemed to be coming to an end, I would still never

imagine that I would be destroyed. Why? It is because of my strong relationship with God. This is a God-given opportunity for you to reform yourselves. Wake up in the nights and occupy yourselves with prayers and also rest awhile. But he who is slothful is doing great wrong to his progeny and his family, for he is like the root and they are his branches.

Some trial is inevitable, as is written:

أَحْسِبَ النَّاسُ أَنْ يَتْرَكُوا أَنْ يَقُولُوا آمَنَّا وَهُمْ لَا يُفْتَنُونَ ﴿١٥٠﴾

In Mecca, the Holy Prophet^{sa} was being given tidings of victory while even his own life was not secure. Only God knows what would have happened if it was not the heart of a Prophet that sustained him. Some trials are sent only to bring about a change. Our own practical example should also be such as to induce positive change in others. The change should be such that the person concerned should feel that he is not the same as before, rather he should become a totally different person. Win the pleasure of God Almighty now so that you might receive glad tidings. While writing yesterday, I came across an old revelation:

أَيَّامُ غَضَبِ اللَّهِ غَضِبْتُ غَضَبًا شَدِيدًا نُنَجِّي أَهْلَ السَّعَادَةِ ﴿١٥١﴾

¹⁵⁰ Do men think that they will be left alone because they say, 'We believe,' and that they will not be tested?—Al-‘Ankabūt, 29:3 [Publisher]

¹⁵¹ Days of the wrath of Allāh. I am greatly wroth. We shall deliver those who adhere to good. [Publisher]

‘Those who adhere to good’ means the ones who furnish practical proof of their sincerity. The faith that is confined to the tongue is no good. The Companions of the Holy Prophet^{sa} proved their sincerity by being ever ready to lay down their lives and even the lives of their children. Today if we ask someone to travel a hundred miles, he puts forth all sorts of excuses with regard to his preoccupations with his business or some matter of honour and prestige, so that he may not have to undertake the journey. But the Companions^{ra} attached not the least importance to their lives, their properties or their honour and prestige.

Some people complain that even though they have entered into the covenant of Bai‘at, they have had to endure such and such hardships. I have repeatedly admonished our Jamā‘at that mere verbal affirmation and mere Bai‘at is of no use. What is required is that they should lose themselves in God and take on a new existence. Nowhere in the entire Qur’ān are we asked to merely believe. Everywhere, we are called upon to prove our faith with righteous actions. In short, God requires from us a death. It is my experience that God never imposes two deaths upon a believer, one for His sake and one for the abuse and derision of the world. At this critical juncture, our Jamā‘at should realize its responsibility and become straight like an arrow. Should thousands die of the plague, I would never blame God and would only affirm that it is they who have departed from the path of righteousness.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ¹⁵²

[Malfūzāt, vol. 4, pp. 279-281]

Partake of the Holy Spirit through sympathy and purification of your selves, for true righteousness cannot be achieved without the Holy Spirit. Leaving all carnal passions, adopt, for the sake of winning the pleasure of God, the path narrow than which there should no other. Do not be infatuated with the pleasures of the world, for they estrange man from God. Adopt a life of hardship for the sake of God. The pain with which God is pleased is better than the pleasure which displeases Him. The defeat which pleases God is better than the victory which should become the occasion of His wrath. Give up the love which brings you close to God's fury. If you come to Him with a pure heart, He will help you in every situation and no enemy will be able to harm you. You cannot win the pleasure of God except by giving up your own pleasure, your joy, your honour, your property and your life, and enduring for His sake such bitterness as should bring you virtually face to face with death. If you will endure bitterness, you will be taken up into the lap of God like a dear child and you will become heirs to the righteous ones who have passed before you, and the doors of every bounty will be opened for you. But few are such people. God has addressed me and said that righteousness is the tree that should be

¹⁵² Surely, Allāh suffers not the reward for those who do good to be lost.—Al-Taubah, 9:120 [Publisher]

planted in the heart. The water that nourishes it irrigates the whole garden. Righteousness is a root without which nothing is of any value, but if this root flourishes, everything flourishes. What shall it profit a man to claim by word of mouth that he is seeking God, when he does not step forth with sincerity? Reflect, for I tell you truly that the person who pollutes his faith with the least desire for the world will be ruined. Hell is very close to him all whose designs are not for God, but some are for God and others are for the world. If you have the least amalgamation of the world in your objectives, all your worship is in vain. In such a case, you do not follow God but Satan, and you should never expect God to help you, for you would be like an insect of the earth, and within a few days you would be destroyed like an insect. God will not be in you. Indeed, it will please Him to destroy you. If you truly impose a death upon yourself, then you will appear in God and God will be with you. The house wherein you dwell will be blessed, and God's mercy will descend on the walls of your house, and the city wherein you reside will be hallowed. If your life and your death and your every movement and your mildness and your wrath will become solely for the sake of God, and you will not seek to try God at the time of every hardship and misfortune, and will not cut asunder from Him but will ever go forward, then I tell you truly that you will become a chosen people of God. You are human beings as I am, and my God is your God. Do not waste your pure facul-

ties. If you will lean wholly towards God, then I tell you, according to God's will, that you will become an exalted people of God. Let the greatness of God be established in your hearts, and affirm His Unity not only with the tongue but also in practice, so that God too should practically manifest His grace and beneficence for you. Shun all rancour and have true sympathy with mankind. Adopt every way of goodness, for you do not know by which way you may be accepted.

I give you the glad tiding that the realm of achieving nearness to God is empty. All people have fallen in love with the world and no one pays attention to that which would please God. Those who wish to enter through this door with full eagerness, have the opportunity to prove their mettle and to be bestowed special favour from God.

[Al-Waṣīyyat, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, pp. 307-309]

Remember that true and pure morals are the miracles of the righteous in which they have no equal. Those who are not lost in God are not bestowed strength from above. They cannot, therefore, acquire the pure morals. Establish a pure and straightforward relationship with God. Discard all mockery, derision, rancour, abuse, greed, falsehood, unchastity, casting evil-glances, sinful thoughts, world-worship, arrogance, pride, self-love, mischief, and vain talk. You will then be bestowed everything from heaven. Until you are strengthened by the heavenly power which

should lift you up, and until the Holy Spirit which bestows life enters you, you are very weak and are in darkness. In fact, you are dead and devoid of all life. In such a case, you cannot contend against any misfortune nor can you escape arrogance and pride when in a position of eminence and wealth, and you are overcome by Satan and your own ego in all respects. Your only effective remedy is that the Holy Spirit, which specially descends from the hand of God, should turn your faces towards virtue and righteousness. Become the children of heaven and not the children of earth. And become the heirs of light, not the lovers of darkness, so that you might escape the highways of Satan. Satan is ever concerned with the night and not with the day, for he is an old thief and steps forth in the darkness.

[Kashti-e-Nūḥ, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 19, p. 45]

Dear people! you are living during a time which had been foretold by all the Prophets^{as} and you have seen the person—i.e., the Promised Messiah—whom many Prophets had desired to see. Hence, fortify your faiths, and set right your paths, and purify your hearts and win the pleasure of your Lord. Friends! you are in this temporary abode but for a few days, and you must remember your ultimate abode. Every year some of your friends depart from you, and soon it will be you departing from your friends. So be alert and let not the poison of this corrupt age affect you. Cleanse your morals, purge yourselves of rancour, malice and pride, and display moral miracles to the world.

[Arba'in, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 442-443]

Remember that a righteous believer entertains no evil in his heart. The more he advances in righteousness, the more he dislikes punishing and chastising others. A Muslim can never entertain rancour, while other people are so full of rancour that they never put it out of their hearts and they ever strive to avenge themselves. We know how our opponents have treated us. They have subjected us to every pain and difficulty within their power. Yet we are ready to forgive them their thousands of mischievous deeds. You who have established a relationship with me, must remember that you must have sympathy for every person of whatever religion he might be, and that you should do good without distinction of caste and creed.

[Taqrīrein, p. 29]

It is our principle to have sympathy for the whole of mankind. If a person sees that fire has broken out in the house of a Hindū neighbour and he does not get up to help put it out, I tell you truly that he is not of me. If one of my followers sees a Christian being killed and he does not go to rescue him, I tell you very truly that he is not of us.... I say it on oath and in truth that I have no enmity with any people. I do however desire, as far as possible, to reform their beliefs. If anyone abuses me, I refer my plaint to God and not to any other court. Despite all this, it is our obligation to have sympathy with the whole of mankind.

[Sirāj-e-Munir, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 12, p. 28]

I particularly wish to admonish my Jamā‘at, who believe in me as the Promised Messiah, that they should eschew these impure habits. Since God has sent me as the Promised Messiah and has clothed me in the garb of Jesus son of Mary^{as}, I admonish you to shun mischief and be sympathetic towards mankind. Cleanse your hearts of all ill-will and rancour. By so doing you will become like angels. Dirty and impure is the creed which does not inculcate sympathy for mankind. How impure is the path which is studded with the thorns of prejudice? You, who are with me, should avoid being such. You should reflect as to what, after all, is to be gained from religion? It is surely not that you should be bent upon inflicting pain on mankind. The purpose of religion is to acquire the life which is lived in God. That life has never been acquired and cannot be acquired except through developing Divine attributes in oneself. Have mercy on everyone for the sake of God so that you might receive mercy from heaven. Come, let me show you the path by following which your light shall prevail over all lights. This path is that you should give up all rancour and envy, be sympathetic to mankind, and lose the self wholly in God, and thereby acquire purity of the highest order. This is how miracles are worked and prayers are heard and angels descend to help. But this is not something you can achieve in a day. You must march on and on. Learn a lesson from the washer-man who first boils dirty clothes over a furnace and continues this process until the fire separates

all dirt and filth from the clothes. Then he gets up early next morning and carries the laundry to the water and after wetting the clothes strikes them repeatedly against smooth stones until the dirt, which had stuck to the clothes and had become part of the laundry, begins to depart. As a result of both the boiling and being beaten against stones, the clothes become as white as new. This is also the way of cleansing the human self. Your salvation depends entirely upon acquiring this pristine whiteness. This is what God Almighty says in the Holy Qur'ān:

153 قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۖ

[Government Angrezī aur Jihād, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 17, pp. 14-15]

So long as a person does not set right his affair with God Almighty in every situation and does not discharge fully the two kinds of obligations that he owes, he cannot achieve his purpose. As I have mentioned, obligations are of two kinds: those due to Allāh, and those due to His creatures. The latter are of two kinds: those that are owed to brethren in faith—whether they are related as father, son, or brother, they are still brothers in faith—and the other obligation is to mankind in general, by way of true sympathy.

The principal obligation due to God Almighty is that He should be worshipped and this worship should

¹⁵³ He indeed *truly* prospers who purifies it [the soul].—Al-Shams, 91:10 [Publisher]

have no personal objective. Even if there were no heaven and no hell, this worship should be carried on, and it should make no difference to the personal love which creatures should bear to their Creator. Thus heaven and hell should be irrelevant with reference to the obligations due to Allāh.

As regards sympathy with mankind, it is my belief that until one prays for one's enemy, one's mind cannot be wholly cleansed. God in His injunctions:

¹⁵⁴ اَدْعُوْنِيْ اَسْتَجِبْ لَكُمْ

has not placed any restriction that He will not accept a prayer in respect of an enemy. I believe that to pray for an enemy was also the practice of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. It was as a result of such a prayer that Ḥaḍrat 'Umar^{ra} became a Muslim. The Holy Prophet^{sa} had often supplicated in respect of him. One should not harbour personal enmity with anyone based on miserliness, nor should one be cruel. I am grateful to God that I cannot recall even one among my enemies for whom I have not prayed at least two or three times. This is what I also ask of you and teach you. God Almighty is as averse to anyone being persecuted and being unjustly treated with animosity out of sheer obduracy, as He is to someone being associated with Him. In one relationship, He does not desire cutting asunder; and in the other, He does not desire association. He does not desire that mankind should cut

¹⁵⁴ Pray unto Me; I will answer your *prayers*.—Al-Mu'min, 40:61 [Publisher]

asunder from each other and He does not desire that anyone should be associated with Him. This is the channel that opens for us the ways of praying for those who deny us. Thereby one's mind is cleansed and broadened and one's resolve becomes fortified. Until our Jamā'at adopts this attitude, there will be little distinction between them and others. I deem it necessary that when a person befriends another for the sake of faith, he should treat the relatives of his friend with love and kindness, even if any of them should be of a low status. It is an attribute of God that:

بدان را بہ نیکان بہ بخشد کریم¹⁵⁵

You, who have established a relationship with me, should become a people concerning whom it has been said:

فانہم قوم لا یشتقی جلیسہم

i.e., they are such that whosoever keeps company with them will not encounter misfortune. This is the purport of the teaching presented in the saying:

تَحَلَّقُوا بِأَخْلَاقِ اللَّهِ¹⁵⁶

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, pp. 96-97]

Today I have seen an announcement published the Chashma Nūr Press, Amritsar, by the Ārya Samāj of

¹⁵⁵ He forgives the evil ones for the sake of the good ones. [Publisher]

¹⁵⁶ Adorn yourselves with the qualities of God. [Publisher]

Qādiān and bearing the date of 7th February 1903. It is headed: *Kādyānī Pope Ke Cheiloñ kī eik Dīng kā Jawāb*¹⁵⁷. In this announcement, our lord and master, the Honourable Messenger of Allāh^{sa} and myself and my respected friends have been reviled in such harsh terms that my heart shrank from addressing a reply to such people. But God Almighty, through specific revelation, has commanded me: ‘Write a reply. I am with you in preparing it.’ I was much comforted by the glad tiding that I was not to be alone in this task. So, having been bestowed the strength from God, I got up and composed this booklet with the support of His spirit. God supported me in my design that I should overlook the abuse which had been heaped upon my master the Holy Prophet^{sa} and upon me and should compose a gentle answer and then commit the whole matter to God Almighty.

But before I proceed to write a reply to the announcement, I would advise the members of my Jamā‘at to endure with patience the harsh language which the publishers of the handbill and their associates have employed for the purpose of causing pain to us and blaspheming our Holy Prophet^{sa}, and the language that they have employed concerning me, calling me a cheat and a liar and a perfidious one, and their calling the members of my Jamā‘at swine, dogs, devourers of carrion, donkeys and apes and dubbing them as *Malīch* [unclean]. I realize fully the provoca-

¹⁵⁷ Reply to a boast of the disciples of the Qādyānī Pope. [Publisher]

tion and incitation which a person feels when he finds not only himself but his Prophet and Leader and Imām insulted and are referred to with contempt. But I say that if you will not endure all this abuse and foul language steadfastly, then what will be the difference between you and others? After all you have not been called upon to endure something which none before you have experienced. Every true dispensation that was established in the world has always been the victim of the world's enmity. As you are the heirs of truth, you are bound to be treated with enmity. Then be warned and let not your egos prevail over you. Endure every harshness and reply gently to all abuse so that you may be rewarded in heaven.

Do not use harsh language concerning the Rishīs and elders of the Āryas lest they should revile God, the Holy, and His Holy Messenger^{sa}. As they are not endowed with true understanding, they would not realize whom they are reviling. Bear in mind that a person who is liable to be carried away by egoistic passions is not one whose lips can utter words of wisdom and understanding. Everything that such a one says is full of poisonous germs and nothing else. If you wish to speak under the instruction of the Holy Spirit, then cast out all egoistic passions and fury, then your lips will set forth the mysteries of pure and true knowledge, and in heaven you will be accounted something that is beneficial for the world and you will have long lives. Do not deride and do not indulge in mockery. Your speech should betray no meanness or

ribaldry so that the fountain of wisdom may be opened for you. Wise words conquer hearts. Ridicule and use of vulgar language promotes disorder. As far as possible, put forth the truth in gentle language so that the listeners are not hurt. He who does not reflect on the reality and, being prompted by his rebellious spirit, uses vulgar language and designs mischief, is unholy. The way to God is never opened for him, nor do the words of wisdom and truth issue from his mouth. If you desire that the way to God should be opened to you, then keep away from egoistic passions and do not indulge in playful discussions for they amount to nothing and are a waste of time. Do not return evil for evil, neither in word nor in deed so that God should support you. You should present the truth to people with a compassionate heart and not by way of mockery and derision. Dead is the heart that makes mockery and derision its practice, and impure is the soul which does not adopt the way of wisdom and truth, nor does it let others do so. If you wish to inherit pure knowledge, do not utter anything out of anger, for such a thing would be empty of wisdom and true understanding. Do not be persuaded to reply to your opponent in contemptuous and derisive terms as employed by the mean and the low and the vulgar. Return a true and wise answer out of the righteousness of your heart, so that you may become heirs to heavenly mysteries.

Be happy and jump for joy that God is with you. If you stand firm upon the truth and faith, angels will teach you, heavenly comfort will descend upon you and you will be helped through the Holy Spirit. God will be with you at every step and no one will be able to prevail over you. Wait patiently for the grace of God. Hear abuse and keep silent, submit to being beaten and remain steadfast. Refrain, as far as possible, from challenging evil so that you may be accepted in heaven. Bear in mind that God is with those who fear Him and whose hearts melt in awe of Him. He becomes the enemy of their enemies. The world does not even look at a righteous one but God, Who is All-Knowing and All-Aware, watches him and safeguards him with His Own hand. Do you not love a person who loves you truly and is prepared to lay down his life for you, and does as you wish, and leaves everyone else for your sake? Do you not hold such a one as dearer than any other? So while you, being men, return love for love, will not God do the same? He knows well who is His faithful friend and who is treacherous and prefers the world to Him. If you will become truly faithful, God's hand will establish a distinction between you and others.

[Tadhkirat-ush-Shahādātāin, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 20, p. 68]

Here I consider it necessary to say that not all those who have entered into the covenant of Bai'at with me are such that I could express a positive opinion about them. I view some of them as dry branches whom my God, Who is my Guardian, will cut off from me and

cast into the firewood. There are some who were sincere in the beginning and possessed anguished hearts, but now they are greatly constricted and no longer exhibit the eager sincerity and light of loving discipleship. Like Bal'am they are only left with their cunning and, like a rotten tooth, they deserve only to be pulled out and cast underfoot. They have become tired and fatigued and this worthless world has caught them in its fraudulent trap. I tell you truly that they will soon be cut asunder from me, except such of them whom the hand of God Almighty should take hold of afresh. Still, there are many whom God has given me forever and they are the flourishing branches of the tree of my being.

[*Fat-ḥe-Islām, Rūḥānī Khazā'in*, vol. 3, p. 40]

Though I am grateful to God Almighty for such good friends, yet it is a part of my faith that even if there remains not a single person with me and all of them go their way leaving me alone, I would still have no fear. I know that God Almighty is with me. Even if I am trampled underfoot and crushed and become less than a particle, and experience persecution and abuse and curses from every direction, still I shall ultimately be victorious. No one knows me, but He is with me. I cannot be destroyed. Vain are the efforts of my enemies and useless are the designs of the envious ones.

O ye foolish and blind ones! was there ever a righteous one before me who was ruined so that I should be ruined? Was there ever a truly faithful one who

was destroyed by God in humiliation, so that He should destroy me? Listen carefully and remember that my soul is not liable to destruction and that my nature is not prone to failure. I have been bestowed such courage and veracity against which mountains are as nothing. I am not afraid of anyone. I was alone and was not unhappy at being alone. Will God then desert me? Never. Will He destroy me? Never. My enemies will be humiliated and those envious of me will be put to shame, and God will bestow victory upon His servant in every field. I am with Him and He is with me. Nothing can break our relationship. I swear by His honour and glory that I hold nothing dearer in this world and in the hereafter, than that the greatness of His religion may be manifested, His glory may shine forth and His Word may be exalted. By His grace, I am not afraid of any trial, even if I am confronted not with one but with ten million trials. I have been bestowed strength in the field of trials and in the jungle of agonizing persecutions.

من نہ آستم کہ روزے جنگ بینی پشت من

آں منم کاندرمیاں خاک و خوں بینی سرے¹⁵⁸

He who does not wish to follow me is free to leave me. I do not know how many terrible and thorny deserts I may yet have to traverse. Why do those who are tender-footed put themselves to trouble with me?

¹⁵⁸ I am not one whose back you will see on the day of the battle; I am the one whose head you will espy in the midst of dust and blood.
[Publisher]

Those who are mine cannot depart from me, neither on account of misfortune, nor in consequence of the vilification by people, nor through heavenly trials and tribulations. Those who are not mine, vain are their affirmations of friendship, for they will soon be separated from me and their last state will be worse than their first. Shall we be afraid of earthquakes? Shall we become frightened by trials in the cause of God Almighty? Can we be separated by any trial which comes from our Beloved God? Certainly not, but even this can only be through His grace and mercy. Those who wish to leave me are free to do so, we bid them farewell. But they should remember that after thinking ill and cutting asunder if they should at any time again incline towards me, such inclination would not receive such honour from God as is bestowed upon the faithful, for the stain of ill-thinking and treachery is a colossal stain.

[Anwār-ul-Islam, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 9, pp. 23-24]

Prayers for Members of the Jamā'at

I pray earnestly that all members of my Jamā'at should be such as fear God Almighty and are constant in Prayer; they get up at night and fall down before God and supplicate, and discharge their obligations to Him, and are not avaricious, or miserly, or heedless, or worms of the earth. I hope that God Almighty will accept my prayers and will show me that I am leaving such people behind. But those whose eyes commit adultery and whose hearts are filthier than excrement

and who do not remember death, I and my God are disgusted with such people. I would be greatly pleased if such people were to leave me, for God desires to make this Jamā'at a model for people to remind them of God. They should be established at the highest level of righteousness and purity and should, in practice and truth, give preference to their faith above the world. But those wicked ones who, having placed their hand under my hand, and having professed that they will give their faith precedence over the world, return to their homes and so occupy themselves with worldly matters that the world becomes their heart and soul, and their glances remain impure as do their hearts, and no good comes from their hands, nor do they move their feet for the achieving of any good; they are like rats who are nurtured in darkness and dwell in darkness and die in darkness. In heaven, they have been cut off from our Jamā'at. Vain is their assertion that they are members of this Jamā'at, for in heaven they are not accounted as such. He who does not comply with my admonition, and does not in truth give preference to his faith above the world, and does not bring about a pure change in his life, and does not become truly pure-hearted and pure-intentioned, and does not cast aside the garment of impurity and unchastity, and does not sympathize with mankind, and does not become truly obedient to God, and does not follow me abandoning his own impulses, is like a dog who cannot keep away from the place where dead bodies are thrown and car-

rion is to be found. Do I need people merely to profess with their tongues that they are with me, so that I should have a large Jamā‘at for show? I tell you truly that if all people were to abandon me, and not one of them was to remain with me, my God would create another people for me who will be better than them in their sincerity and loyalty. It is a heavenly attraction that is drawing good-hearted people towards me, and no one can obstruct this heavenly attraction. Some people rely more upon their own cunning and deceit than upon God. Perhaps, in their hearts, they secretly entertain the notion that all Prophethood and Messengership is pretence and it is only by chance that such people acquire fame and acceptance. There cannot be a concept more corrupt. He who entertains it has no faith in God, without Whose determination not a leaf falls. Accursed are such hearts and accursed are such dispositions. God will destroy them in humiliation, for they are the enemies of God’s designs. Such people are in fact atheists and possess impure hearts. They live a cursed life and after death they can look forward to nothing but the fire of hell.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 503-505]

I myself have full experience in this regard, and it is purely by the grace and beneficence of God Almighty that I have enjoyed this delight and pleasure. My only desire is that I should devote my life in His path, should die in His path and be revived again and again to serve Him. Each time my eagerness and delight would be multiplied.

Since I have myself experienced it, if I were to be told by God Almighty that there is no merit and no benefit in such dedication and that all will be pain and misery, even then I would not desist from serving Islam. I, therefore, consider it my duty to advise and convey this to my Jamā‘at. It is up to them to lend ear to it or not. If anyone seeks salvation and is searching for a pure and immortal life, then let him devote his life for the sake of God. Let everyone strive to attain the status where he can say that his life and his death, his sacrifices and his prayers are all truly for the sake of Allāh. Like Abraham^{as}, his soul should cry out:

أَسَلَّمْتُ لِرَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٣٧﴾¹⁵⁹

So long as a person is not lost in God and does not die for His sake, he cannot acquire new life.

You who have established a relationship with me can perceive that the real purpose of my life is to devote myself in the path of God. Now look into yourselves and see how many are there who would choose this path for themselves and would love to devote their lives to the service of God.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, pp. 99-100]

Name of the Jamā‘at and its Significance

The name which is appropriate for this Movement and which I prefer for myself and for my Jamā‘at is

¹⁵⁹ I have submitted to the Lord of the worlds.—Al-Baqarah, 2:132
[Publisher]

*Musalmān Firqah Aḥmadiyyah*¹⁶⁰. It would also be appropriate to call it Muslims of the Aḥmadī faith...I have chosen this name because the Holy Prophet^{sa} had two names, Muḥammad and Aḥmad^{sa}. The name ‘Muḥammad’ contained an implicit prophecy that the Holy Prophet^{sa} would punish with the sword such enemies who would have attacked Islam with the sword and slaughtered hundreds of Muslims. But the name ‘Aḥmad’ represented his beauty, which indicated that he would spread peace and harmony in the world. God so arranged the life of the Holy Prophet^{sa} that his Meccan life was a manifestation of his name Aḥmad and the Muslims were taught steadfastness and endurance, while in his life in Medina, his name Muḥammad was manifested, and God in His wisdom decided to chastise the enemy. But there was a prophecy that the name Aḥmad would be manifested again in the latter days and that a person would appear through whom the qualities of beauty, which characterized Aḥmad, would be manifested, and all fighting would come to an end. For this reason, it has been considered appropriate that the name of this sect should be the Aḥmadiyyah Sect, so that everyone hearing this name should realize that this sect has come into being for the spread of peace and harmony and that it would have nothing to do with war and fighting.

[Majmū‘ah Ishtihārāt, vol. 3, pp. 364-366]

¹⁶⁰ Aḥmadiyyah Muslim Sect [Publisher]

Names like Ḥanafī, Shāfi'ī, which people have appointed for themselves, are all innovations. The Holy Prophet^{sa} had only two names, Muḥammad and Aḥmad^{sa} Moses^{as} described the Holy Prophet^{sa} as Muḥammad^{sa}, for Moses^{as} himself was a manifestation of glory. Jesus^{as} described the Holy Prophet^{sa} as Aḥmad^{sa}, for he himself was a manifestation of beauty. Since our community has been established for the manifestation of beauty and harmony, it has been named Aḥmadī.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 2, p. 208]

The Need for Acquiring Knowledge and Using it Wisely

The best way of holding religious discussions is not to criticize a religion foolishly but to put forward one's objections respectfully on the basis of the accepted and authentic books and writings of that religion. There should be no mockery or derision or insult and all discussion should be conducted wisely. Nor should such objections be raised against a religion with regard to which the objector's own faith is open to criticism....Every research scholar can put forward objections pointing out the mistakes of doctrine of any sect in a reasonable and respectful manner. An effort should be made that all objections should be of a scholarly nature so that people may benefit from them, and it should not create any disorder or provocation.

[Kitāb-ul-Bariyyah, Rūḥānī Khazā'in, vol. 13, pp. 15-16]

I consider Maulavīs who are opposed to the acquisition of modern knowledge to be in error. They, in fact, do so to cover up their own errors and weakness. They have convinced themselves that research into modern sciences leads to error and alienates a person from Islam. They seem to hold that reason and science are totally inconsistent with Islam. As they have not the capacity to expose the weaknesses of philosophy, they seek to cover up their own shortcomings by propounding that it is not permissible to acquire modern education. Their souls tremble before philosophy and prostrate themselves before new research. They have not been bestowed the true philosophy which is born of Divine revelation and of which the Holy Qur'ān is full to the brim. This philosophy is bestowed only upon those who prostrate themselves at the threshold of God Almighty with extreme humility and self-negation, whose minds and hearts exclude all putridity of pride and who, confessing their weaknesses, implore and affirm humbly that they are the true servants of the Divine.

For the service of the faith and for upholding the Word of Allāh, it is essential that you study the modern sciences, and study them diligently. I must, however, warn that it is within my experience that those who pursued this study one-sidedly and were so taken up by it that they had no opportunity of keeping company with anyone who loved God and remembered Him, and who did not themselves possess inner divine light, such people have generally stumbled and

turned away from Islam. Instead of subordinating their learning to Islam, they embarked upon a vain effort to subordinate Islam to modern sciences and, in their own estimation, acquired the monopoly of religious and national service. Remember, however, that he alone is capable of performing religious service who is guided by heavenly light.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, pp. 68-69]

I wish to admonish the members of my Jamā'at that they should learn Arabic, for without it they cannot appreciate the Holy Qur'ān. In order to understand the Qur'ān, it is necessary and proper that they should make some effort to learn Arabic. In these days, many easy methods have become available for learning Arabic. It is the duty of every Muslim to study the Holy Qur'ān. It does not therefore become a person to pay no attention to the learning of Arabic, while his whole life is devoted to the learning of English and other languages.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 1, p. 297]

Avoid Needless Debates

I categorically forbid the members of my Jamā'at, wherever they might be, from participating in debates, disputes and confrontations. If they happen to hear something disagreeable, they should overlook it. I say with confidence and full faith that a great preparation is afoot in heaven in our support. We have conveyed the message to the people in full measure and from every point of view. Now God Almighty will carry out His design which He always does after the message has been fully conveyed. I fear that if the

members of our Jamā‘at should not refrain from harsh language and purposeless discussions, the heavenly design might be delayed or obstructed, for it has ever been the way of God Almighty that His chastisement overtakes those upon whom He has bestowed innumerable favours and bounties, and to whom He has exhibited His signs. He pays no attention by way of chastisement or admonition or reproach to those against whom His final decree is yet to issue. In the Holy Qur’ān, the Holy Prophet^{sa} was addressed:

فَاصْبِرْ كَمَا صَبَرَ أُولُوا الْعَرْصِ مِنَ الرُّسُلِ وَلَا تَسْتَعْجِلْ لَهُمْ¹⁶¹

وَلَا تَكُنْ كَصَاحِبِ الْحُوتِ¹⁶²

فَإِنْ اسْتَطَعْتَ أَنْ تَبْتَغِيَ نَفَقًا فِي الْأَرْضِ¹⁶³

This admonition was made because the Holy Prophet^{sa} sought a quick decision with regard to the disbelievers, while God Almighty, having regard to His purpose and His ways, proceeded slowly and gently. But in the end He crushed and ground down the enemies of the Holy Prophet^{sa} in such a way that all traces of them disappeared. In the same way, it is pos-

¹⁶¹ Have patience, then, as had the Messengers of strong determination; and be in no haste about them. —Al-Aḥqāf, 46:36 [Publisher]

¹⁶² And be not like the Man of the Fish. —Al-Qalam, 68:49 [Publisher]

¹⁶³ [Yet, if the turning away of the disbelievers bears hardly upon thee,] then, if thou art able to seek a passage into the earth [or a ladder unto heaven, and bring them a Sign, thou canst do so.] Al-An‘ām, 6:36. [Publisher]

sible that hearing abuse and impostures and vilifications of all kinds directed against this truthful Jamā'at, some of its members might become impatient and might desire the hasty chastisement of the enemy, but they should always keep in mind the way of God Almighty which He adopted with regard to the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Therefore, I direct you repeatedly and emphatically to keep away from all occasions of disorder and dissent, because the task that you desire to accomplish—i.e., to fully convey the message to your opponents—has now been taken by God Almighty in His Own hand.

Your task now should be to occupy yourselves with prayers, seeking forgiveness, worshipping God, and the purification and cleansing of your souls. Thus make yourselves deserving of the favours and attention of God Almighty which He has promised. Though God Almighty has made me great promises, and there are many great prophecies which I am sure will be fulfilled, yet you should take no pride in them. Avoid every kind of jealousy, envy, rancour, backbiting, arrogance, pride, all overt and covert ways of evil and vice, sloth and heedlessness. Remember well that the good end is always for the righteous, as God Almighty has said:

وَالْعَاقِبَةُ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ¹⁶⁴

Therefore, be concerned to become righteous.

[Malfūzāt, vol. 3, pp. 282-283]

¹⁶⁴ And the end is for the God-fearing.—Al-A'raf, 7:129 [Publisher]

One day you will be brought face to face with death.
No plan can succeed against the decree of God.

You will have to leave this mortal world one day,
Everyone is powerless before the command of God.

You have to carry on faithfully O man,
In face of grief and sorrow, in disappointment and pain,
and faced with calamity.

Despair not from God Who resolves all difficulties.
Difficulties amount to nothing for Him Who relieves all
difficulties.

Humble human beings cannot fulfil thy needs,
Lay thy needs before Him Who has power to meet all
needs.

Wipe out from thy heart all trace of a second one,
Prostrate thyself before the Master of the heaven and the
earth alone.

Hate vice and love virtue,
Remember that one day you too have to present yourself
before God.

In confrontation with Truth, how can falsehood flourish?
What value has a stone compared to a priceless ruby?

[Durr-e-Thamin as quoted from Alfadl 13 January 1928]

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